THE BEST FRENCH SHORT STORIES OF 1926-27

And the

Yearbook of the French Short Story

Edited by

Richard Eaton

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AND THE YEARBOOK OF THE FRENCH SHORT STORY

EDITED BY

RICHARD EATON

Editor of "The Best French Short Stories of 1925-26," "The Best Continental Short Stories of 1925-26," etc.

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I shall be grateful to my readers for corrections and particularly for suggestions leading to the wider usefulness of these annual volumes. In particular, I shall welcome the receipt from authors, editors, and publishers of short stories published during the period between June, 1927, and June, 1928, inclusive, which have qualities of distinction and yet are not printed in periodicals which would ordinarily come to my attention. Such communications should be addressed to me in care of the "Service des Accrédités, Crédit Lyonnais, Boulevard des Italiens 19, Paris, France.

R. E.

PREFACE

The literary construction of the modern French short story is distinctly more complex than that which we know in America. Its public is a limited one, quick to appreciate the finesse of such stories as the *Substitute* by Henry Bordeaux. The only readers of the French short story are members of the intelligentsia and this consideration influences the author of present day short stories in France as much as political conditions during the days of the Third Empire.

The origin of the modern French short story dates from the reign of Napoleon III. During his rule, the censorship was so stringent that the very existence of the press was seriously menaced. The publication of even quasi-political or economic articles was strictly forbidden. The newspapers consequently found that their circulation was rapidly dwindling. At this time, *Ruy Blas* made its appearance. It was a weekly paper which gained the interest of its readers through the publication of extremely short stories or *contes* instead of editorials. The *Figaro* and other newspapers were quick to seize upon this new idea. The *conte* grew constantly in vogue and gradually replaced the political editorial, which at that time was the sole reason for the existence of the French newspaper. Its characteristic, a complete episode whose interest never flagged and whose length never exceeded a newspaper column, met with great favor. The skilled writers of *contes* were highly paid and inevitably the supply soon was far greater than the demand. The revolution of 1871 saved the *conte* from its literary decline.

The formation of the Third Republic ended its utility. There was a revolt against the artificial restrictions imposed on this form of literature and the *nouvelle* or longer short story grew more popular. With this evolution, however, the reading public of the short story diminished. Today, its ap-

peal is far more intellectual than in the United States or Great Britain. Despite the American influence on post-war French literature which I explained in the preface to this volume last year, one cannot judge the Gallic short story by our own standards.

In America, the short story is written for the appreciation of millions of readers. In France, the *conte* or *nouvelle* is read only by thousands. One often hears the reflection that the French short story does not compare favorably with that in America. I can only reply as did Lenine shortly after the Russian revolution when reproached by the council of ambassadors for breach of diplomatic rights. It is all a question of a point of view. From that of the Bourgeois, I am wrong. From that of the Bolshevik, I am justified in my action. One can criticize the literary value of the French short story but one cannot compare it to our own.

R. E.

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THE BEST FRENCH SHORT STORIES OF 1926-27

THE SOUTH WIND

By MAURICE AUDUBERT-BOUSSAT

The day dawned; the sky was a leaden mass, filled with dark, grey clouds. The mist hung so low that one could almost grasp it with one's outstretched hand. The wind, howling and raging, seemingly tireless, blew the mist about, hither and thither. The clouds, bumping one against the other, moving swiftly like a herd of horses crazed and wild with fright, moved from one horizon to the other. It was the South Wind, which brings both rain and storm, lashing its whip over the heads of the clouds in an effort to mass them together, like a shepherd with his flock.

Hou—ou! The wind had slowly gained force during the night. It had started silently, creeping along like an assassin, strong in the knowledge of his force; noiselessly, it had reconnoitered the ground, feeling its way across the open fields which were sleeping confidently in the arms of the silent night; and now it blew, furiously and fearlessly, striking out in wild rage, dealing its treacherous blows, cutting to pieces the clouds of mist, which had accumulated in the valley during the night, and scattering their remains in all directions. In its blinding rage it scaled, at a single leap, the mountain rising up in the distance, outlined against a sky now grown livid with fright; it descended the other side of the mountain with a howling noise, shaking the trees as it passed and covering the ground with branches and leaves. The oak trees, old and rotten, the brooks and rivers near by, trembled with fear.

Hou . . . ou! The whole valley was now groaning under the severe lashing of the wind. The branches of the trees were bent down to the ground, like a crowd of people gathered together and kneeling before the representative of the Church to receive his blessing. And up above the fertile

valley, the South Wind tried to take hold of the gray cliffs stretching towards the west; clutching at the holes in the walls, whose toothless mouths, gaping out upon the stony land surrounding the cliffs, gave forth a sound as of mocking laughter. The wild birds inhabiting these cliffs scrutinized, with anxious looks, the troubled skies.

The crowing of a rooster awakened Celestine. The room in which she was sleeping was close and hot and she had a feeling of intoxication. She lay for a moment listening to the monotonous ticking of the clock. Half asleep, her gaze wandered in the direction of the darkened window; the heavy shutters, fastened insecurely, were shaking and rattling in the wind. Several stones were blown against the house, and a tile, torn from the roof by the raging wind, fell in the courtyard with a loud noise.

The peasant woman, frightened, sat up in bed. Leaning over, her mouth agape, she tried to pierce the darkness. What was happening?

Suddenly a loud ringing noise shook the house: a pitch-fork, leaning against the side of the house, which had been forgotten the night before, fell upon the stone paving with a thud, giving forth a singing sound like that made by the wind howling through the willows of a swamp.

Celestine raised her head, dreamily. The balance-weight of the cuckoo-clock, standing in a dark corner of the room, near the door, suddenly stopped descending; there was a creaking sound of winding springs, followed by a sharp snap, and the little, wooden rooster showed itself, crying out triumphantly:

"Cou—cou! Cou—cou!"

Five times he cried out in the darkness, and then went back into his roost. The woman jumped out of bed; she shook her husband, who was asleep, calling:

"Peter! Hey, Peter!"

Peter, grumbling and yawning, opened first one eye and then the other, scratched his head, turned over and went to sleep again.

"Peter, get up! Hey, Peter," she called again.

"What's the matter, old woman?"

"Come on, Peter, you must get up. It's time to get up."

"What do you mean: 'It's time to get up'?"

"It's five o'clock, old man. You must get up. . . . Come on, get up!"

Celestine, yawning loudly, felt about in the dark for her clothes and began to dress herself. Peter, angry at being awakened, grumbled:

"Light the candle! You can't see your hand in front of your face in this room."

She, thinking of the waste of money, replied: "You must be quite rich, old man! You must be quite rich to want to light a candle at this hour!"

The old man said nothing more, but he made no move to get out of bed until she had opened wide the shutters. The daylight entered the room, and with it, the howling of the wind as it blew against the windowpanes. Peter approached the window and looked out. He remarked, scratching his head:

"It sure won't be any easy job going to The Fair with that infernal wind blowing!"

His wife replied, dryly: "The harder it will be for you to go with the wind in front of you, the easier it will be to come back with the wind behind you. It's no different from any other time."

The peasant woman helped the old man to get ready; she brushed his black blouse and felt hat, which he was accustomed to wear on the days when he went to The Fair. He was not very careful about the manner in which he dressed himself now; not as in his younger days, when he used to drink heavily and live fast and free. Very often now, when he would grumble and complain about the hard work he had to do, she would say:

"If you hadn't run around so much when you were young, you would have more strength now. Everybody knows that you can't burn a candle at both ends and expect it to last very long."

And so, while the wind howled without and the day announced itself dark and dreary, Celestine hastened the preparations for Peter's departure. When he was ready, she turned him about from left to right and right to left for a final examination. He, submissive, laughed quietly to himself: he was thinking of the excellent meal that he was going to have in the company of the other peasants whom he knew, who visited The Fair; of the good wine he was going to drink, and of the fun he would have, joking with the young girl, smiling and pleasant, who would serve them.

Saddling together the two oxen, which he was to take to The Fair to sell, he went forth under the dark, heavy skies, plunging into the wind which filled his ears with a howling sound like the sea raging with fury, and made him sway to and fro like a tree in a storm.

"For he was a jolly good fellow,
He was a jolly good fellow." . . .

"Hey, there, Red-top! You gosh-darn fool! And you, Silent One! Stop your dreaming! Do you want to return to your bed? Hey! Hey! Will you turn a bit? Surely the flies are not eating you on a day like this! . . . Has Celestine lost her head to let me go away like this? But I should worry. You must close the door of the cage if you do not want the bird to fly away. The wife commands, and I, Peter, have nothing to do but obey. Get along with you, you gosh-darn fools!"

He took up his song again where he had left off:

"For he's a jolly good fellow,
And so say all of us."

The wind, with a sound like that made by a huge organ, snatched the tones of the song from his lips. It tried to uplift the oxen, the cart, the man and the song, but the huge oxen stood their ground, and the wind whistled through their horns. The old peasant, bent in two, bareheaded, his hat held under his arm, clung to the oxen, laughing and swearing in turn. His blouse, held fast against his chest by the

terrific wind, was puffed out enormously in back, and clacked loudly like a whip.

"Hey, there, Red-top! Hey, there, Silent One!" . . .

The words, pushed back into his throat by the infernal wind, issued one by one and were carried away like particles of dust.

Along the road, the trees gave out sounds like the groaning of a church organ, grinding out the notes of the "Halleluja": here the poplar trees made a noise like the swishing of silk; there the leaves of the elm trees, rubbing against the stumps of the bare branches, sounded like the cawing of ravens; still farther beyond rose the buzzing of the wind among the heavy foliage of the beech trees, and through the hedges came the piercing music caused by the Wind playing upon the needles of the juniper trees.

"Hey, there! Red-top, turn, . . . turn!"

The road behind Peter was filled with carts and wagons going to The Fair; they passed him, accompanied by the cracking of whips and the swearing of men. The large wagons creaked along under their loads, each one carrying several men and a number of calves crying for their mother. The butcher-wagons, painted in bright red, huge, with prison-like doors, rolled along empty, conducted by drivers round as apples; these wagons would return at night filled with bleating cattle destined to finish their days at the stockyards.

"Hey, there! Peter, move your oxen!"

"Hello, there, Mascoulon! I can't move them in this wind! . . . I can't move them, I tell you!"

"Hell's bells! How am I going to pass with my wagon?"

"Oh! Gol-darn it! Hey, there, Red-top! Hey, there, Silent One! Turn, will you? We've got to make room for the others!"

Buffeted about by the laughing, howling wind, Peter jabbed the sides of his oxen with his guiding-stick, and finally managed to make them move over to the right side of the road.

The wagon passed.

"So long, Peter! Don't stop too long, eh?"

"So long, Mascoulon!"

Don't stop too long? He had no time to lose if he wanted to arrive in time for The Fair! Could he arrive, blown about by the wind as he was, from one side to the other? His progress was slow; he was exhausted and ready to give up. The perspiration was streaming from his face.

"Hey, there! Peter, look where you are going!"

"Hey, there, old man! You're taking up all of the road!"

As these shouts arose from the throats of the farmers coming behind him, Peter turned furiously upon his oxen: he pounded their heads with his fists. The poor beasts accepted silently his fury and his ragings, standing their ground. Finally, after much urging and pleading, pounding and swearing, upon the part of Peter, they decided to move ahead.

The old farmer cursed the wind; cursed his old wife who had started him out on the road to The Fair in such terrible weather; cursed the other farmers who were shouting at him to make room: he was tired of hearing them call: "Hey, Peter! Make room!" He had as much right upon the road as they! The Devil take them and the cursed wind!

Cursing his wife, he cried out: "Celestine! Celestine! You wicked woman! On Judgment Day you will get what's coming to you!"

He mumbled to himself as he went along, now taking his hat from his head, now putting it on again, gesticulating wildly and hitting the road with his whip.

At last, up over the tree-tops, the sound of the church bells situated at St. Perdoux, where The Fair was being held, came to his ears. He was nearing his destination.

The sky remained filled with a heavy mass of clouds; not a single ray of sunshine anywhere. The sun, unable to pierce the clouds, had no doubt given up the attempt; the day would be dark and dreary throughout.

"Hey, there! Silent One, get along with you!"

There still remained two miles between Peter and his goal: a long stretch with the wind driving as it was. His face bitten by the wind, his throat dry from shouting to

his oxen, he battled along. Suddenly the voice of a woman hailed him:

"Hello, Peter!"

She was seated upon the driver's seat of a small cart, her face braving the wind, holding the reins of her horse in one hand and the sides of her black cape, blowing in the wind like the wings of a raven, in the other. Peter's anger left him instantly.

"Well, I'll be jiggered if it isn't Rosine. How are you, old girl?"

"Rosine Baboulene, herself! Your old love, who believed all your lies, you old villain!"

He was quite troubled; she laughing. They had not seen each other for many years.

"Now, now, stop that, Rosine! So you are going to The Fair, too?"

She opened the canvas covering of her cart: "As you see," she said.

A little pig, pink as a rose, looked out at Peter with his frightened little eyes.

"A fine little pig," admired Peter.

Rosine said: "Peter, you had better walk behind my cart. The canvas will protect you and your oxen from the wind."

He accepted joyfully. The way to St. Perdoux now seemed quite short. They talked of the good times they had had together, recalling old memories.

"I do not mind the wind, now, Rosine. I would follow you to the end of the earth, no matter how strong the wind!"

She turned to him laughing, the light of the old love which she had had for him shining in her eyes.

"Ah, Rosine, I needn't tell you! You're worth two Celestines, but you know, for several reasons . . . but what's the use? It's too late now."

His flaming eyes watched her breast rising and falling with the movement of the cart, and, bitterly, he compared it with that of his wife, Celestine, flat as a table.

"God Almighty!" he exclaimed to himself.

The woman, quite troubled, cried: "Hey there, Peter! Hasn't wisdom entered that old head of yours yet?"

"Yes, my head, old girl, but not yet here!" And he placed his calloused hand upon his heart. Laughingly he added: "The harder the wind blows, the harder the fire burns."

She turned to rein in the horse, which had begun to gallop. They spoke no more during the rest of the journey. Soon they reached The Fair. They parted with:

"Good-by, Rosine, and thank you for your help."

"Good-by, Peter."

She rode on through the wind and the crowd, into the fair grounds, while he made his way to the inn, "Hercules' Hammer," the oldest in the town. Up above the entrance hung a sign, reading: "Here we lodge man and beast." At this inn, he would meet Eloi Gougoule, the most important buyer of horses and cattle in the region.

At this hour, back home at Monastair, where Peter lived, it was time to feed the fowl. The courtyard was full. The chickens were clucking about like a crowd of women at a bargain counter; frightened by the strong wind, which blew their feathers up straight upon their backs, they were jumping about from place to place. The geese, heavy with fat and foolishness, were holding a conference near the watering-place. One of them, as though suddenly gone mad, opened wide its wings and went running down the yard, pushed about hither and thither by the wind, like a canoe on a wild river, trumpeting out its deafening cry. The others began to imitate their companion and soon the courtyard was filled with their cries.

Celestine, putting down her broom, filled her apron with grain and went in among them. As soon as she appeared, the noise ceased. She threw the food into their outstretched mouths, crying:

"Be quiet, be quiet!"

And having distributed the grain, she returned to the kitchen, took up the broom again, and swept out into the

yard the crumbs of the evening meal of the day before. "It must be noon," she said to herself. Approaching the door and shading her eyes with her hand, she stood for a moment scanning the road and listening. Peter should soon be coming home from The Fair; but she could hear nothing but the howling of the wind.

"Not yet," she said, as she closed the door against the wind. "I only hope that he has sold the cattle."

She was impatient to know the result of his trip to The Fair. She would have liked to go with him, so that she could have known at once. Three days before, Peter was amazed to hear her say:

"Peter, you must go to The Fair and sell the oxen."

"Sell Red-top! Sell Silent One! Never!" he had replied.

She had looked at him coldly and resolutely:

"You will go; you must go!"

Peter had begun to grumble and had questioned:

"Why do you want to sell the oxen?"

"Because we need the money. We must economize. At The Fair, you will get a good price."

Economize? Did they not have enough to eat? Why was she so determined to sell the oxen? To all his questions Celestine had replied:

"We must economize. We need the money."

And she could be induced to say nothing more and had let Peter grumble to his heart's content.

Peter had gone to The Fair because it was not he who ruled the house. Ah, no! He knew why Celestine wanted to sell the oxen. She wanted to put the money away so that he could have less to spend. When a man likes to spend money upon other women, his wife . . .

But there had been an understanding between them upon this point for many years now: he could have his little fun, now and then, but she would rule the household and take care of the money. The first few months it had been very difficult for Peter to accept this arrangement, but gradually he resigned himself. After all, so long as he could do about as he pleased when away from home, what mattered who

ruled at home? At heart he was not a bad man; but he was very strong-headed and it was hard for him to forgive. Several years ago he had thrown his son out of the house and had never permitted him to return.

Celestine stood at the window, her forehead against the glass, gazing out over the tops of the mountains outlined against the sky, and thinking of her son. She had suffered terribly since the day when Peter had sent her boy from the house. She had never let Peter know of her grief; the cold light in her blue eyes hid her suffering.

She could see in her mind, as though it were yesterday, for the scene was engraved upon her memory in images of fire, the day when her only son had announced to her and Peter his determination to leave the country and go to the city.

"I will find work there," he had said, "I do not want to become a farmer."

Peter's eyes had blazed with rage, the rage of a man who was ready to plant a knife in the throat of his fellow-man. But neither threats, nor prayers, nor tears could move the son's determination.

"I want to go to the city," he kept repeating, "I want to go to the city."

Peter raged throughout the night; his anger disturbed his dreams. The next morning, his decision made, he confronted his son. He told him severely that his duty was to remain at home. But the boy obstinately shook his head.

"You are decided, then, to go?" Peter had cried angrily.

"Yes, father."

"All right then, leave the house, you ungrateful good-for-nothing." And, livid with anger, he had opened the door: "Get out of here! Go to your cursed city and never come back!"

Since that day the two old farmers had each worked a bit harder.

Peter soon forgot the absence of his son; he soon began to laugh and joke as he had been accustomed to do before

his son's departure. Whenever his wife spoke of the absent one, his brows would contract, and the same fire that had shone in his eyes when he had driven his son from the house would reappear. For him, his son no longer existed; he wished to think or speak of him no more.

But the thought of her boy was forever in the mind of Celestine. Her boy, like many other boys, soon made the acquaintance of the painted girls of immoral conduct who are to be found in the saloons and houses of evil repute which abound in the cities, and it was not long before he was tightly enmeshed in their greedy clutches. Two months after his arrival in the city, he was writing to his mother, asking for money:

"My beloved mother," he wrote in his first letter, "I have had very bad luck. But I have something good in view. I need a few francs to keep going." There followed a recital of the "affair" in view and the letter ended in a profusion of tender, grateful words.

Her mother's heart could not refuse him the money, and the francs which she had slowly saved up one by one left the old wardrobe to be placed upon the gambling tables or to enter the perfumed pockets of the painted prostitutes.

In his later letters he began to grow more bold, more insistent:

"Dear Mother: I am sending you this letter to tell you that matters are very bad with me. I asked you for six hundred francs and you only sent me four hundred. Am I your son or not? I am awaiting the balance. Please add another hundred or two, as I have a wonderful affair in view which will put me on my feet. . . ."

Celestine now realized the true value of her son. His constant demands for money, his letters written upon paper smelling of cigarettes and liquor, had opened her eyes. Her heart bled from the wound caused by her disappointment. Yes, as Peter had said, her son was a good-for-nothing! And yet, on the very rare occasions when her boy was the subject of conversation between Peter and herself, she defended this good-for-nothing son, in spite of the evidence and in spite of the pain in her heart.

Peter knew nothing of the letters which his son sent to Celestine. They were given to her secretly by the postman, who would make sure that Peter was not about before giving her a letter.

And so today, as Peter was away at The Fair and there was no reason for her to conceal her feelings, Celestine was giving free rein to her pain and misery, as she stood at the window, reviewing the events of the past few days. She had received, five days ago, another letter from her son. While she was reading it, a lump had risen in her throat, she had become suffocated and had felt as though she were going to faint. So this was her son! Flesh of her flesh! This being of shame and dishonor—her son! She who had always lived so uprightly and honorably! He no longer begged; his letter was now full of menaces. He told her brazenly that he was entitled to his share in the estate; that she and Peter had no right to leave him without money. His words of unjustified anger; his threats and menaces had danced before her eyes. He wrote:

"It is your duty to come to my aid. The law requires you to do it. Rather than let myself be cheated out of my rights, I will set fire to the house and everything else . . ."

This time he had asked for three thousand francs. She did not have the money. Too proud to ask a loan from the neighbors, Celestine had searched her mind for a possible solution of the problem. In the morning of the fourth day following the receipt of the letter, she had made up her mind; she would sell the oxen. And now Peter had gone forth into the driving wind to The Fair, to sell the oxen and bring her the money.

Suddenly Celestine heard the barking of a dog, along the road. Her heart rose in her throat. Was it Peter?

Leaning from the doorway, she listened attentively to the footsteps approaching. It was the postman; she recognized him by his walk.

The postman, a fat, jovial person, clad in heavy, hob-

nailed shoes, his black bag flapping against his stomach, soon entered the courtyard.

"Good-day, Celestine Peyrolles. All alone today?" he said, winking his eye.

"All alone, Jantou. Peter is at The Fair."

Winking his eye again, the postman took from his bag a letter enclosed in a yellow envelope and gave it to Celestine. Masking her emotion, she said to him, calmly:

"Would you like to have some soup, Jantou?"

The postman, tired, and curious to know the contents of the letter, accepted. Seated at the table, he ate loudly and slowly, watching Celestine out of the corner of his eye. She stood with the letter in her hand, waiting for the postman to leave before opening it. She was impatient for him to go, for she knew from whence the letter came. Her forehead was damp with perspiration caused by the effort to mask her feelings in front of the postman.

"And so Peter has gone off to The Fair?" said Jantou, lingering. "The old devil!"

After a moment, he added: "It's blowing hard, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is."

"And he went to The Fair in this wind, all by himself?"

"All by himself."

Jantou stood waiting for her to open the letter; he could find nothing more to say. Celestine placed the letter upon the table, determined not to open it in his presence. Finally she decided to offer him a glass of wine to get rid of him.

"Here's to your health, Celestine Peyrolles," he said, as he took the proffered glass.

"Here's to yours, Jantou."

He wiped his lips and moustache, then, deciding that it was useless to remain longer, he threw his bag over his shoulder, took his stick and approached the door:

"Good-by, Celestine Peyrolles, and thank you."

"Good-by, Jantou."

Out in the road, the dog began to howl again. Celestine stood waiting, listening to the footsteps of the postman as they grew fainter and fainter. The rolling of the stones in the

wind, murmurings of earth and sky, seemed to be drowned out by the loud, fast beating of her heart. She tore open the envelope with a trembling hand and read:

"Dear Mother: This is to tell you that I have now waited four days for your reply. You cannot understand what it means to wait four days in my present position. I am being menaced and am going crazy. It makes me wild to think that for a few thousand francs I shall be sent to prison. Yes, to prison! And it's you who wish it to happen. You and father who are working for my ruin. But I will be revenged even if I have to go to prison or to Hell for it. You told me in your last letter that you were going to sell the oxen at the next Fair and that you would send the money at once. But nothing of that is true; you lied to me.

"You cannot make me believe that you have no more money. I know what the farm is worth.

"Now, mother, send me the money I asked of you right away—at once, or I will . . .

"I am boiling with rage and am capable of doing most anything; I will stop at nothing.

"Your son,
"Prosper Peyrolles."

My God! Was it the wind blowing from the fireplace that made her turn so? There was a pounding in her head like the beating of drums, subdued shocks like those made by picks in a coal mine; her ears were ringing and lights flashed before her eyes.

Her limbs grew weak; she dragged herself to a chair near the fireplace. In her hand, the letter trembled like a dead leaf in the autumn wind, the words dancing about in devilish glee. The flames in the fireplace, fanned by the howling wind, lit up the glassy eyes of the old woman; she watched the flames roaring up into the chimney without seeing them. Mechanically she brushed back from her icy forehead a mesh of grey hair that had fallen into her eyes.

The awful silence was broken by the cuckoo-clock. The wooden rooster came forth, crowed twice and returned to his nest. Celestine heard nothing: neither her brain, nor her ears, nor her eyes were functioning.

Her son? The letter? They were far away now, lost in

the awful emptiness that filled her brain. Before her eyes, there was now a large circle of fire, surrounded by dancing shadows, in the center of which was an enormous black hole; an abyss. Her eyes, wide open and staring, appeared like those of a person about to become insane. They focused themselves upon this awful, black hole; it grew larger and larger until it seemed as though she must be swallowed up by it. Was she going insane? Was she dreaming? No— No, it was true! It was there before her—that circle of fire and that hole which was growing larger and larger!

But suddenly the flames in the fireplace grew brighter, circling around like a thousand shining snakes; the vision in her troubled brain disappeared, and she had the impression of awakening from a bad dream.

"Oh! It's terrible! I must not let myself go like this," she said to herself.

She tried to fight off the fainting spell that seemed to want to take hold of her.

And now, among the many feelings which were juggled about in her crazed heart, was one of remorse. It was the same feeling that had often come to her during the past few months at twilight when she would be sitting alone with her thoughts and reflections; for it is at twilight, when the day begins to die, that human beings grow sad and the feeling of remorse for their past acts takes hold of their hearts.

Heretofore Celestine had always been able to still this feeling of remorse, for she had defended herself with the thought that all the wrongs against Peter for which she reproached herself, she had committed, not in her own interest, but in order to aid her son; blood of her blood, and flesh of her flesh. But now, weakened and half fainting, this feeling of remorse would not be stilled.

Peter! What would he say if he knew! Did he not have the right to a little ease and comfort? Why did she make him work so hard to satisfy the demands of her son? Peter must never know—never! Her son, unworthy and degraded though he was, she must save, cost what it may!

Unconsciously she repeated the same words that Peter had

cried out to her that morning, as he fought the wind on his way to The Fair:

"On Judgment Day, everyone will get his due!"

But she was ready: she had followed the dictations of her heart.

But now she began to wonder if the path which she was following was the path of Righteousness. Was she being loyal to Peter? His image rose before her eyes; his tanned and wrinkled face, marked and lined by hard labor and the elements; his childish anger, which she could calm by a single look; his chidings and jokes: he was her husband! But there was the other one—the other one, her son! No! she could not abandon him.

The cuckoo-clock struck five . . . then six o'clock. Peter did not return. Darkness began to envelop the room, lighted up, from time to time, by the spurts of the flames in the fireplace which cast against the wall the shadow of the old peasant woman crouching before the fire.

Celestine, suddenly closing her two eyes, which pained her like two open wounds, fainted. And there followed a horrible nightmare:

She saw before her a long stretch of fields, drenched with rain, lying underneath lowering skies; a rocky road, filled with twists and turns, the stones rolled along by the driving wind. She passed along this road, running like a crazed woman, her head bowed down to protect her face from the terrible, cutting wind. She stopped to lean against a tree by the roadside which was shaking under the force of the storm. Everything within her and around about her trembled. An owl, sitting upon one of the branches of this tree, suddenly rose in the air like a ball and tumbled at her feet. Wild-eyed, she stared at the living mass of feathers from which gleamed two enormous eyes like two moons of emerald and gold.

She tried to run away; her feet were fastened in the muddy clay which seemed to move and vibrate like the beating of her heart. She wanted to cry out, but could not; her throat was parched and dry, and she could not utter a

sound. She stood there, fascinated by the flaming eyes of the owl which held her rooted to the spot, as a snake, before striking, fixes its victim with its gleaming eyes.

And suddenly the eyes of the owl grew larger and larger, forming enormous circles which turned round and round and approached nearer and nearer. Celestine, crying out in terror, held out her arms to ward him off. As he came close to her, lo! and behold! his face took the shape and form, and his eyes took the color, of those of Peter; it was her husband, Peter!

Peter! She managed to free her feet and fled down the road, the owl, hooting, in pursuit of her. She saw the distance between them grow shorter and shorter; the owl approached nearer and nearer: she heard the terrible batting of his wings, and then his face was next to hers: it was Peter's face! He was grinning terribly, as he cried out:

"Celestine, Celestine! wicked woman. What have you done with my money? Where are my oxen? Celestine, the Day of Judgment has arrived! What have you to say for yourself? Wicked woman, what have you done with my money?"

The road spun about her. Crazed with fright, she sped on and on, stumbling over the stones and the roots of the trees growing out into the road, the owl—Peter—behind her, howling and menacing.

She was approaching an open space, where bright lights twinkled. She thought that here surely she would find safety. The owl, frightened by the lights, would hide himself in the darkness behind her! She hastened faster, faster . . .

Almighty God! Just in front of her there appeared a large circle of fire in the center of which was a big, black hole, and the road led into that hole!

She could hear the rustling of the owl's wings behind her, and she heard him cry again:

"Celestine, Celestine! wicked woman! What have you done with my money?"

The owl was upon her, she could already feel his terrible claws cutting into the back of her neck, as he screeched once more:

"Celestine, Celestine! What have you . . .

With a horrible cry, she threw herself into the black, yawning pit before her. She began to roll and roll, a lifeless mass. Soon the noises of earth and sky grew fainter and fainter and then were stilled. She rolled along in the blackness. And suddenly a dim, gray light pierced the awful darkness, showing to her startled eyes a rocky cave.

And as she entered the cave, the light changed from gray to purple, and out of the shadows, there appeared a thousand lamps from which issued lights of different colors, disclosing floating draperies enveloped in mist. And as she came closer, these draperies took on the form of human beings: there were thousands and thousands of women clad in dresses, the material of which comprised all the colors of the rainbow, floating about the cave. They passed along silently, while other thousands awaited their turn in the dark shadows behind. And suddenly they formed a circle about her, and closed in upon her. She tried to ward them off, but they came in closer and closer, suffocating her. And as they circled around, they began to sing a licentious song to which she could not keep herself from listening, and she was filled with shame and horror.

The dancing developed into an orgy, as they sang:

"We are prostitutes,
For whom men kill, for whom men become brutes,
Hoorah! for the nights, gay and jolly,
We are prostitutes full of folly!"

The lights in the cave suddenly went out, except one. The single light left burning was the color of the ocean: it lit up, with a blue-colored glare, the dancing women. And lo! and behold! their dresses fell off their bodies, leaving them naked. Their arms, covered with bracelets, circled about like blue-spotted serpents; their breasts shook with the movement of their bodies. The light, color of the sea, changed to purple, and the color of the bodies of the naked women changed to ruby. They took up their song again:

"We are prostitutes,
Ah—ah! Ah—ah! . . ."

A violent odor of musk issued from their naked bodies and almost suffocated Celestine. Crazy with fright, unable to move, she was pushed brutally against a human form, who held out his arms towards her: it was her son Prosper!

Prosper! His face wore a horrible grin and his two eyes, the color of clay, fastened themselves fiercely upon the face of his mother. His arms, hard as steel, closed about her body, as he said:

"Mother, I just want to tell you that I am capable of doing most anything. . . ."

He tightened his hold; she thought that her bones would break, and her heart stop beating. His eyes, clay-colored, held hers fast. Thank God! it was the end! She gasped for breath, her lungs refused to function: she was dying! ah! . . .

Standing before the fire-place, Celestine watched the dying flames. She passed her damp hand across her forehead which was covered with beads of perspiration.

During the awful nightmare, from which she had just awakened, the letter from her son had fallen out of her hand into the fire, and was now finishing to consume itself.

The wind, which had grown calm, began to rise again. Celestine listened to it crying at the door. Slowly, her head began to clear: above the creaking and rattling of the house in the wind, she distinguished now the rolling of the wagons, returning from The Fair, the cries, calls and songs of their occupants. She approached the window and looked out; she watched the wagons going by without seeing them: her mind was filled with other things, her thoughts were sad, and her heart was filled with remorse.

She was too busy with her thoughts to hear the noise made by some one who slowly opened the door behind her.

A man entered the room, noiselessly, looked about in all directions, and then, reassured, advanced stealthily towards the window. Holding his breath, he stood for a moment, watching the silent form of the woman.

He had a moment of hesitation. Who knows? Perhaps a

battle was being waged in his mind; perhaps he would have pity for this poor, old, suffering woman. But, no! He had no shame! He advanced. The floor creaked under his feet; Celestine did not move. He tried to speak, not daring to touch that silent statue, but the words would not come; they stuck in his throat. He had not thought that it would be so hard. The ringing of the door-bell stirred him to action. What was he dreaming about? Acting the part, forcing a smile, he said:

"Mother!"

Celestine jumped as though she had been bitten. She put her hand to her head: was she hearing voices again? After the terrible nightmare, was she now having hallucinations? Was she becoming insane?

"Mother!" he said again.

She turned, startled, and saw her son standing before her.

"You! You here!" she cried.

She could scarcely speak, terror-stricken at the look in his eyes and at the thought that he had dared to come.

He said calmly:

"Yes it's me. I came because . . . because . . . well I came, that's all!"

"But, you are crazy! What if your father should come now!"

A mad light shone in the eyes of the man. Hitting the table with his first, he shouted furiously:

"What do I care! It's his fault, all of this! You should have sent me the money!"

She tried to quiet him; she told him how unhappy she was to see that he had turned out to be a bad son, that money was not very plentiful, that Peter was killing himself with work. She recalled to him how happy they had been together before, the three of them, living a calm, simple life. But he, fearing an interruption at any minute, grew irritated at her friendly words and cried out:

"I don't care anything about all of that. That's nothing but lies! lies! I came here to get the money you promised me. I will have it quicker this way and it's more sure."

She made a movement of despair, saying:

"I have no money. Your father has gone to The Fair. . . ."

He put his face, distorted with rage, close to hers:

"Oh! you have no money, eh? You have no money! And how do you live, then? You've got the money hid away somewhere here!"

"No! No! I swear it. . . ."

Crazy with anger, he put his fist up to his mother's face, threatening her. Flattened against the wall, her face white as a sheet, she looked at that terrible fist, which, in the darkness, took on exaggerated proportions, and danced before her eyes.

Large tears, which she had until now held back, rolled down her cheeks, the color of wax.

Ashamed, the son dropped his arm, took his mother by the shoulder and asked her to forgive him. He said:

"You see! I do not know any more what I am doing: I have suffered so much since I have been away to the city. At first everything went along all right, but now. . . . And when I think that I could be rich, happy, and I am only a good-for-nothing . . . my blood boils and I could set fire to everything—everything!"

She could hear his words with difficulty: her head was going around, and her tears kept her from seeing his face.

He continued:

"And now, if you wanted to, you could put me on my feet with a few thousand francs . . . but you won't do it."

Yes! Yes! She would! She forgot everything: her remorse, her sorrow, and the movement which he had made to strike her a moment ago. She would give him all the money that she had in the house. Her heart softened towards him. He was a good-for-nothing, but she was his mother!

"No! You don't want to give me the money! You prefer to see me go to prison."

Her throat dry, painful, she cried:

"No! No! Take everything I've got! Oh, my God! My God!" . . .

She was suffocating and her heart was beating wildly. Her son was crushing her in his arms.

"Where is it? . . . Quick! . . . Quick! . . ."

"There in the wardrobe. You will find the money under the sheets. . . ."

Her head bowed down upon her breast, her hands tightly clenched, she watched her son rummaging among the sheets in the family wardrobe. The dog began to bark outside: the son, alarmed, fearing the arrival of his father, searched feverishly among the linen.

But he could find nothing. He threw the sheets out upon the floor. And suddenly he felt a lump under his hands, something hard: he had found it!

He thought that he heard someone outside, approaching the door. In a single bound he was at the door. Turning, he looked wildly at his mother, and cried out:

"Good-by, mother!"

And he closed the door behind him with a bang.

Celestine, nailed to the wall with fear like Christ to the cross, in the same suffering pose, listened to the footsteps of her son as he ran away from the house, rolling the stones about as he rushed along. Soon she heard him no more. The wind howled at the door; then a moment of silence ensued. The cry of her son: "Good-by mother!" rang again in her ears, and then, suddenly, her heart seemed to stop beating, and with a choking cry, she fell fainting to the floor.

It was twilight when Peter started upon his way to his home. The clouds hanging over the bleak, red cliffs, had changed their color from gray to golden. The wind continued to howl, as the sun began to go down in the heavens; it would blow now all night and for the following two days. Peter, buffeted about hither and thither by the terrible force of the wind, made slow progress.

The same wagons which had passed him that morning on their way to The Fair, now repassed on their way to their homes, some empty, others full, groaning under the weight of their cargoes like pirate ships filled with booty.

Troops of sheep, kept in line by shepherd-dogs, masses of oxen, wild, squeaking pigs cluttered up the road, bumping one against the other.

In the middle of the road, a pig stubbornly refused to advance, hiding its head in the skirts of a farmer's wife. The farmer, holding the animal by the tail, pulled furiously while he pounded its fat, rosy sides; his wife, holding her limbs together, slapped the pig's large ears, crying:

"Hey, there! you scoundrel, will you get along there!"

Peter laughed at the drama. He was feeling good: he still had in his mouth the taste of the liquor which he had drunk and his head was a bit befogged by the alcohol. He had needed this liquor to make him forget the pain which he had experienced in parting with his oxen.

He had had great difficulty in obtaining the price which he asked. The cattle-buyer, a large man, bubbling with good health, showed himself hard and cruel. But it is difficult to obtain an advantage over Peter. The cattle-buyer could slap his hands together as much as he desired; he could wag his tongue, thick as that of a calf, as long as he wished. Peter was firm: he had said:

"That's my price and not a franc less!"

Peter secured his price; the buyer was forced to give it, for Peter had his mind made up: if he was going to sell his oxen—and the Good Lord only knows why he had consented to sell them—he had determined to get a good price. He had succeeded and he was contented.

Peter hastened along in the darkness as fast as his tired legs would carry him. The wind puffed out the blouse which he was wearing, giving him the appearance of an enormously fat man. From time to time, he tapped his breast-pocket to make sure that the roll of bills was still there.

Now he had reached a large fountain. This part of the road, where the fountain was situated, was infested with evil-doers. He hurried past this place, casting his eyes about from right to left. He approached the cross-roads called "The White Cross." Before him, he saw two persons: it was a young fellow chasing a laughing, young girl. The boy

caught up with her, kissed her loudly upon the mouth, and they cut across the fields. They were soon lost to sight.

Peter hurried along. A little more and he would see, from the top of the hill, the roof of his farm-house and the little light burning in the window.

At last! He was at the cross-roads! But what was the matter! Had he been drinking too much, or had his eyes lost their strength? Everything was black before him. He could see faintly the gray road, the small path lined with hedges, the small hill situated near his home—but his house! Where was his house? Oh, yes! There it was, a black mass! But where was the light that always welcomed him upon his return in the evening from the fields? What was the matter? He said to himself:

"Is it possible that Celestine hasn't prepared supper yet?" And then with an angry shake of the head: "She's got her nerve . . . at this hour. . . ."

Suddenly a black mass came bounding along the road towards him. Hey, there! It was his dog Clopin.

"What's the matter, Clopin? What's the matter?" he inquired.

The dog began to howl, and bounded away in the direction of the farm-house. Peter followed with fear in his heart, stumbling along as though he were drunk.

The house was black and silent, as though prepared for a funeral. The chickens, lying in the coop, were drowsing.

As he approached the house, Peter cried out:

"Celestine!"

The wind swallowed up his cry. He called again, louder:

"Celestine! Celestine! Ho!"

There was no reply.

Peter, now shaking with fear, the perspiration running down his forehead, rushed to the door and opened it. The room was dark; he could see nothing. He called out:

"Celestine! where are you? It's Peter! Ho!"

Obtaining no response, he advanced into the room, feeling his way along in the darkness. In the fireplace a piece of wood was still burning, looking like a huge, red eye in the

darkened room. He lit a match, and became angry at the slow manner in which it took fire. Finally the match flared up.

"My God!" he exclaimed.

The match had flared up for an instant and the flame had died, but in that instant Peter had seen the lifeless body of Celestine lying upon the floor.

"Poor woman! My poor woman!" he lamented.

Trembling from head to foot, he lifted the limp form into his arms, and with great effort, for his strength had left him, he carried Celestine to her bed, bumping against the chairs and table as he went. Having deposited his burden, he searched for his lantern, which was hanging against the wall, and with an unsteady hand, he lit it. The lantern, lighting up the room, disclosed the wardrobe, the door open, the contents lying about in a disordered condition.

With his lantern, he examined the interior of the wardrobe, standing with mouth agape, forgetting for the moment his wife lying inert upon the bed. Dumbfounded, his head in a whirl, he murmured:

"What has happened? My God! What has happened?"

He turned towards the bed:

"Poor woman, my poor woman, tell me what has happened."

He suspected a robbery:

"Was it a thief who was here? Tell me, did he strike you? Answer me! Tell me, who did this?"

The waxen face of Celestine did not move. The blood, flowing from her temple across her cheek and down upon her neck, had begun to coagulate. Peter, holding the livid eye of the lantern against her deathlike face, searched for a sign of life. He was as though rooted to the spot: he could not move. It was all like a terrible nightmare to him. But he must secure aid! He gathered together his strength, and leaning over the body of his wife, he said, as though she could hear him:

"Be patient, my poor woman. I will go and get Huchotte."

Taking his lantern, he closed the door quietly and went out into the night.

Huchotte, his neighbor, lived not far away; he was quickly at her house and on his way back with her.

Peter talked and talked with his neighbor as they hurried back; his fear was somewhat calmed by the presence of a third person. He explained to the woman what had happened, giving his idea of how the thief had managed to enter his home and strike down Celestine. When he stopped for a minute to pull back his blouse which the wind had blown against his lantern, she urged him on:

"Get along Peter. I'm following you."

It was quite some time before Celestine gained consciousness. Huchotte bustled about, washing and bandaging the wound; Peter, huddled up in his chair, his elbows leaning upon the table, watched the woman at her task.

When Celestine opened her eyes, she gave a loud cry like one awakening from a horrible nightmare; she looked about the room, at the lantern, at her neighbor, Huchotte. Then she saw Peter, and trembling, she said softly:

"Peter, my man. . . ."

She closed her eyes. Huchotte, putting her hand upon Peter's shoulder, said:

"Go and fetch the doctor."

"At this hour? He won't come!"

"Go and fetch the doctor, I tell you, and quickly. . . ."

Peter obeyed, and went forth with a heavy heart into the driving wind. He hurried along like a crazy man, his weak and tired legs groaning under the strain. He returned over the same route which he had traversed that morning. His hand, soon frozen by the cold wind, could no longer hold the lantern; he put the handle of the lantern about his neck, and continued in this fashion. Amid the darkness and the howling wind, with the lantern bobbing up and down upon his chest, he looked like some big giant just escaped from Hell.

When he had traversed only one-half of the distance to the home of the doctor, a puff of wind, laughing mockingly, blew out his lantern. He continued on his way in the dark-

ness, without the light of the moon, without stars, feeling his way along the road with his walking-stick like a blind man.

Celestine Peyrolles hovered between life and death for six days.

On the morning of the seventh day, the doctor, bending over the ravaged face of the sick woman, shook his head with despair. It was not the wound upon her forehead which made him lose hope of saving her, it was her frequent ravings, followed by a gradual weakening of her strength. He realized that the disordered condition of her mind would soon sap the life from her body.

The hours passed. The sick woman, her eyes closed, seemed unconscious. But she was not unconscious: she was trying to conserve her strength. She was fighting for her life against the Implacable Enemy. All day long she fought hard, but at night the fever seized her again, and the trembling lasted throughout the night. Perspiring, held in the clutches of a horrible nightmare, she cried out and fought against an imaginary enemy. The sheets seemed as heavy to her as so much earth, and she had the impression of being buried alive. Peter came in running, alarmed at her shouts, and stood near her bed, taking her in his arms and holding his face close to hers in an effort to calm her.

She tried to close her eyes now, to shut out the world from her mind, but there persisted for her, in her mind's eye, the image of the head of a huge spider, without a body, carried along by eight long velvety feet.

Crazed with fright, she turned over on the other side. And, lo! and behold! she saw another face, with eyes the color of clay. And suddenly she saw an enormous fist, rising up slowly through the empty space, touching her face as it passed. She lay there, her arms like lead, her limbs without strength, waiting for the terrible fist to descend upon her face.

And so the night, filled with horrible nightmares and terrible sufferings, passed. At daybreak, with the coming of the

light, came a few hours of relaxation for Celestine: she fell asleep. She would now no longer hear the howling of the wind which blew incessantly and which had magnified her nightmares.

When she awoke, she saw Peter in the adjoining room, eating. Her eyes filled with tears at sight of him, and she called out weakly, so weakly that he did not hear her:

"Peter, my man! . . ."

The feeling of remorse which she had succeeded in chasing, for several hours, had reappeared, strongly, sharply. Her lips compressed, she fought with herself, and her eyes, normally a dark-blue colour took on the light-blue colour of steel.

After he had finished his meal, Peter took a seat near the bed of the sick woman. She dared not look at him for fear that he would read her secret; she kept her eyes focused upon the ceiling. But finally tired of the fight, she turned her eyes in the direction of her husband. He said to her:

"My poor woman, tell me what happened. Tell Peter what happened."

He had asked her this question several times before; it was the question which she dreaded. She made believe that she had not understood, closed her eyes, sighed and feigned to be sleeping. Peter, after a moment, thinking that she was asleep, softly left the room with shoulders bent and head bowed.

No! No! she would never tell him! He must never know! And yet what if she should die without telling him! She knew that she was losing strength every day; very often her heart would stop beating for a moment and, panting for breath, her hand clutching her breast, she would wait for her heart to take up its pulsing again. At such moments, fear and remorse seized her: the fear and remorse that she would enter the Great Unknown carrying with her the awful secret, the wrong unavowed and unpardoned.

Her cowardice made her shed bitter tears. But the minutes, which seemed as long as hours to her, passed, and she made no effort to divulge her secret.

Peter reëntered the room, and seeing that Celestine was awake, approached the bed and questioned her again:

"Tell your man what happened. Tell me, my poor old woman."

Celestine closed her eyes, choked back the words of confession which tried to force their way out, and did not reply.

Four days passed in this manner, four terrible days which sapped slowly the vitality of the old woman.

In the morning of the fifth day, Peter had gone out into the fields, leaving Celestine in the care of Huchotte. The doctor, who had called at daybreak, taking Peter aside, had said to him:

"There's nothing to be done. Her strength is all used up. Her nerves have been holding her up, but now. . . ."

He raised and lowered his shoulders with a sigh of impotence.

Peter, his eyes filled with tears, forgetting all their little quarrels of the past, kept repeating to himself:

"My poor old woman! My poor old woman!"

And then he went out of the house, his head bowed down, his shoulders bent.

For two days now, the wind had stilled its deep and ugly voice; the sun was now bathing the fields in its healing light. The hills round about had resumed their former calm aspect: some covered with greens, others with grape-vines, and still others farther beyond were covered with wild plants, blood-red poppies, and daisies.

Peter, his shoes covered with a thick coating of earth, walked about dreamily hither and thither, with slow-moving steps, taking no interest in his work.

When he returned to the house, Huchotte had left. Upon hearing footsteps, Celestine began to tremble. She called out:

"Peter!"

Peter approached her bed. His heart sank like a lump of lead in his breast at the sight of her, for he found her greatly changed, and also because he now knew that there was no hope for her. He took a seat near the bed. Celestine, with

great effort, took hold of his hand. Her utter weakness made the tears come to his eyes. To hide his emotion, he began to speak:

"The wheat is quite high; we must soon cut it . . . as soon as you are up and about. The sun has come back again: it will bring health to the soil, and it will mean money to us. . . ."

He told, in language of the soil, what work there was to be done immediately and what work could be left for later; he thought that he would earn more money with his live-stock this year than last. . . .

Weakened almost unto death, Celestine heard him vaguely; in her head were mingled, with the words of Peter, the imaginable sounds of the rustling of the leaves and the heavy blows of the South Wind: she was like an ocean passenger, who, after stepping off the boat, still hears the howling of the sea ringing in his ears, and continues to feel the rocking of the boat.

The fire of determination lighted up her eyes for a moment: she would tell him before it was too late! She said:

"Peter, my man, I am going to tell you. . . . Come closer. . . ."

Her tired face became animated with resolve: was she going to denounce her son?

"Come closer . . . the wardrobe . . . the sheets . . . you know. . . ."

Peter, breathless, awaited the words of revelation.

Celestine stopped talking, seized with a violent trembling. She had seen a cold, green light of fire come into the eyes of her husband. And she feared for the life of her son, for him who had brought about her present condition. The light went out of her eyes, and she murmured:

"The sheets . . . I was holding them in my arms . . . when . . . I do not remember any more . . . my head turned . . . I let go of the sheets and I tumbled. . . ."

This lie, these words, which damned her for all Eternity, were the last words which would leave her mouth forever.

Peter, sobbing, watched her face, marked with suffering,

grow stiff and cold, and the eyes close tightly like the sealing of a grave.

Celestine Peyrolles was dead.

The next morning her face took on an appearance of calm and repose; she seemed to be sleeping peacefully. That horrible feeling of remorse which had clutched her heart and enmeshed her soul for many months, like a pair of pincers heated in the fires of Hell, would trouble her no more.

THE SUBSTITUTE

By HENRY BORDEAUX

Can the ravages of death be appeased by the voluntary substitution of one soul for another?

The Catholic religion contains the dogma of the communion of saints and a reward for the righteous. Can our prayers or actions then redeem the unworthiness of another soul? It is the divine will that we should not accept easily this idea, and it is only with difficulty that we are able to cling to these miracles, presentiments and communications which appear to come from a mysterious world and whose forces radiate like spiritual waves. If their existence is, however, real, can there be any possible relation between these phenomena which occur and which do not seem to be interdependent?

A very strange incident called my attention to this most interesting problem as yet unsolved by me.

Hunting for grouse is only worth while at daybreak, when the bird exhilarated by its own song and intoxicated by its own music, is neither thinking of nor looking for danger. This is not the case with the woodcock which must be hunted with the setting sun—and in search of which I used to travel far and wide on the mountain sides of the Glière in Tarentaise, returning in the evening to my little inn at Champagny-le-Haut tired and exhausted. Champagny-le-Haut is a small pleasant village of Savoie, situated at an altitude of thirteen or fourteen thousand feet, and whose location in Switzerland would have warranted the erection of many large hotels. Brides-les-Bains is reached by a picturesque route, below one sees a deep ravine through which flows one of the tributaries of the Doron which joins the Doron de Pralognan at Bozel.

It is necessary to cross and go beyond Champagny-

le-Bas, whose inclining steeple recalls to one's mind the leaning tower of Pisa. I know this little inn very well, having passed many nights there after my trips in the Vanoise. The proprietor, a good man by the name of Champoulet, had a very large family, so that it was not an unusual occurrence to find a lost urchin or an adventurous hen in one's room. The old mother of the proprietor tried to keep things in order but being eighty years old she lacked authority—she was moreover a very strange woman. She had been nicknamed *Mère Aumône,* because of her many charities. At Villarlurin, a small village renowned by the bathers of Brides, there is a *Mère Abondance.* This little village is famous also for the wine from Asti and also for its jams. But Champagny-le-Haut reduced *Mère Aumône* to tatters, as it was her custom to give everything away. Nothing of great monetary value, but whatever she had to give was given with a kindliness of heart which endeared her to all, and no one hesitated to unload their burdens on her. Can you picture a woman so thin that her face was transparent? Around her neck she wore the family heirloom, the heart and cross of Savoie, in gold if you please, which hung from a black velvet ribbon. This heirloom has a history: because she had given it away more than ten times, only to have it returned to her again. The poor unfortunate on whom she would bestow this bit of jewelry, would work by fits and starts in order to earn just enough money so that he could return the gift to its owner. In this way she never parted with it for very long. One day, an individual of ill repute even refused this gift, replying:

No thank you. That costs too much.

He had no desire to follow tradition and work in order to earn enough so as to be able to return the gift.

Imagine a voice as soft and gentle as a trickling brook, but very easily understood—again another miracle!—and whose toothless mouth, thin wan lips, and faded blue eyes which no doubt formerly were as blue as the heavens or the myosotis, were now the color of dried mint leaves.

It really would take an André Jacques to draw this picture

for you—that unique illustrator of the high valleys of Savoie, who passed long drear winter months in the little villages of the Saint-Sorlin-d'Arve, in order to get his own impression of these gentle folks, whose faces betrayed long lives of hardship and privation, but also revealed a beautiful soul—

Mère Aumône and I became close friends and we had many chats together. In these villages, no other interest existed between husband and wife, mother and son, father and daughter, sister and brother than the daily material exigencies. The old woman deserved something better. I took her by surprise as she was showing the mountain lilies, the glory of all alpine flora, to the children.

In the evening when the stars, the flowers of heaven, appeared, she would endeavor to teach these young urchins their names, but it was in vain, as they would only remember them for a very short time. They were not inclined to be studious.

Upon my arrival, I noticed a kind of agitation overcoming this old woman, which seemed in some way to rejuvenate her.

So there you are, *Mère Aumône,* the same as always! Time has dealt very kindly with you.

Each day brings me nearer, she replied.

Each day brings you nearer to earth?

No, but to God, she would reply, adding:

At that more than anything else, my good Monsieur.

What does she wish to convey by all this? And then she said once again:

Have you not seen anything in the mountains?

Not even a grouse or a chamois. Nothing but white partridges. And that's not very much.

And nothing else?

No, nothing else.

Didn't you see the spectre of death?

Certainly not, Madame Champoulet.

Why should I have seen it?

Because, maybe it is there. It is there where one is very apt to encounter it.

I was accustomed to her strange manner of expression, which could be likened to a mysterious poetry of a supernatural world, inhabited by phantoms and of which she was already a part. In order to direct our conversation into different channels, I began to laugh.

Oh! there is ample time yet to see it, Monsieur.

There was no possible chance of diverting her thoughts. Happily the supper hour had arrived, the expression employed in the country, and it was a great task to assemble all the clan. The old woman was placed in a corner of the dining room and I at the extreme other end where the other guests were supposed to be seated. Alone with a large plate of delicious aromatic soup before me, I heard a confusion in the hall which sounded much like an armed troop about to leave its barracks, and then a priest appeared at the head of a group of young students, with mountain sticks in their hands and sacks on their backs.

Me for the soup! for the soup! cried the gayest of the group.

It was with great difficulty that the priest was able to subdue this exuberance of spirit. Even good old Champoulet himself was casting a suspicious glance at these new recruits who were about to demand shelter from him.

Can you give us food and lodging for the night?

Something to eat, yes, Monsieur le Curé— But as for putting you up for the night, there are not enough beds for all of you.

But certainly you can find place in the granary.

Yes, I have a granary with hay to be sure.

Well, that will do very nicely. So the children amused themselves playing about the fountain, until supper time.

How many are there of you, Monsieur, l'Abbé? demanded the innkeeper.

Eight altogether with the guide, because Veyrier remained behind.

You left someone behind?

Yes, but in a safe place, with Felix-Faure of Vanoise. The guide will dine with us.

And then the group dispersed just as noisily as it had assembled upon its arrival, in order to allow Monsieur Champoulet to set the table and finish preparing the ragout. As for myself, I was totally forgotten, and after my plate of soup was empty, I beseeched the innkeeper not to forget his promise about the warm ham, so I waited patiently until the others had arrived in order to finish my meal. Three quarters of an hour later the young folks put in an appearance and seated themselves at my table, exclaiming loudly that they were very hungry, so I had fears that I never would receive my portion of ham, but in time my fears were dispelled, being served amply not alone with ham but also with an ample helping of potatoes and cabbage, *la pièce de résistance* of every meal.

A short time later I was able to obtain some details of this little expedition. It was the custom of Abbé Regis to take a group of students of philosophy for a tramp in the mountains each year before school began. They had crossed the Grand-Casse and had spent the night at a little inn situated at an altitude of two thousand feet. In order to avoid the floating blocks of ice which detached themselves under the hot rays of the sun, the little group set foot at daybreak, and on approaching the glacier they immediately used a rope to avoid any mishap. The descent revealed a charming lake with beautiful bluish green reflections from the glaciers. This was an entirely new experience to some of the group who returned at night overawed by all this splendor.

The fact of being obliged to be fastened together by a rope gave them an added thrill of adventure and danger. On account of the steepness of the descent, the guide insisted upon employing the rope again. This being accomplished safely, they drank a toast to the health of the guide with almost as much pomp and ceremony as a general might be apt to do in complimenting a regiment after a brilliant manœuvre.

In the meantime the family Champoulet had finished their meagre repast and were assembling near our group.

Mère Aumône was as always alert and serious. The innkeeper and his wife busied themselves with clearing the table.

This young group of students were refreshing to have about, and without the least warning *Mère Aumône* began questioning them in the same manner as she had previously questioned me:

And didn't you see anything in the mountains?

To which the abbé replied very politely, yes indeed, we saw nature in all its grandeur, the glory of the Lord.

And nothing else?

The glacier was deserted, Madame, and we didn't even meet a soul.

This closed the discussion temporarily but she gazed intently at the priest with her pale colorless eyes. It was only a few minutes later that he realized that her gaze was centered on him.

Do you wish to ask me any other questions, Madame?

Yes, Monsieur, a bit later. I will wait for you.

He appeared perplexed.

You will wait for me?

Yes, for you or for another.

For him or another; this was even more perplexing, and her speech did not seem as odd as heretofore.

During the conversation the name of Veyrier, François Veyrier, was often mentioned, in admiration by his friends, and with a hatred bordering on jealousy by his enemies. I understood that this was all about their companion whom they had left behind— And all of a sudden the conversation became very animated:

That is all nonsense, said a boy who was experiencing his first trip in the Alps; he was not a bit sicker than I was but he was afraid, that is the reason why he didn't come with us.

Impossible, replied another in an angry tone. Afraid! you don't know him!

Certainly he was afraid. He was not familiar with the mountains or their perils. He was afraid to cross the glaciers— And then he said:

I know that François did not come along with us because he was unable to.

And as for me, I place no faith in his so called illness, it was simply a case of fear.

Favre, come here, called Palon. He spoke with extreme caution—without a guide, certainly one is in danger. The best proof of it being the use of the rope. The great danger of today lies in the fact that so many young people venture out without a guide. A good guide is always a good guide. It is foolhardy to cross the Grand-Casse when the sun is up, there is always danger from the detached blocks of ice. One must not dare to venture then!

Do you hear that? commented another, an enemy of François Veyrier.

Yes, those who are absent are always wrong, was the snappy reply of another antagonist.

Those who are absent? At this point, the door opened and revealed a newcomer, whose arrival caused much interest. The subject of all this clamor was François Veyrier, whom I could identify without any difficulty. Everybody rose when he appeared and shouts of surprise and of welcome came from all corners. In truth, all this ovation made him feel ill at ease. He was a fine strong fellow, and very well built, but whose eyes at present were dull and his face haggard.

After a bit, he exclaimed, oh, I have had a very hard time.

We have experienced the same, my friend, replied the abbé.

But you have not seen the spectre of death, added the youth.

Hearing this, *Mère Aumône* approached very slyly, demanding in her cold thin voice:

And you have seen it, Monsieur?

As plain as I see you, Madame.

And did it appear in back of you?

I do not think so. I ran very very fast in order to get ahead of it.

With laughter gloom disappears, so we set about to offer François Veyrier something to drink, and then after seating him at the table he was served with cabbage soup. By this time he appeared more at ease and laughed about all the fuss which was accorded him.

Now tell us all about your strange experience, said the priest, addressing Veyrier.

Oh! that is simple enough. After your departure, toward three in the morning, I fell asleep. Previous to this, I had been very ill, and my one thought was, if only I would be strong enough to make the descent. Awakening, refreshed by a short sleep, I felt better— And then I prayed to be able to join you! I began the downward journey retracing your tracks on the glacier, which were of great assistance to me. In spite of the strong rays of the sun, my feet did not slip, so that I felt secure. By noon, I was already at the passage between the two mountains, without having encountered a soul. Here I was all alone, in this beautiful spot where the walls of snow made as it were an imaginary picture frame for the blue heavens. I cannot tell you the names of all this mountain range because this was all new to me—and then just as I was about to descend, something very strange occurred. He kept very quiet after this, his eyes giving one the impression that he was trying to overcome some feeling of great fear, but the restless group urged him to continue his narration:

Tell us all about this strange happening. What was it?

The thing that frightened me?

You see, cried one of his enemies, he was afraid. But to the man who denounces himself, his apparent cowardice is very often bravery.

François Veyrier commenced by saying, I did not know that such things existed in the mountains. The mountains always seemed to me immobile, motionless masses for all times.

Do you understand me, I am from Lyon and am not accus-

tomed to anything of this kind. It was startling, they moved, and swayed and I was terrified."

Once again he became silent as if to endeavor to chase away this phantom which was still pursuing him:

And then loud roars of thunder came thick and fast, and lo and behold, here were this troop of white cavaliers on a gallop. They seemed to pass above my head in order to lose themselves in oblivion.

By way of interruption, the innkeeper remarked to the guide Favre, They were blocks of ice!

He resumed his tale by telling of the huge drifts of snow which surrounded him after this, as if to suffocate him.

That was only an avalanche, remarked the guide.

Alas, he continued, ever after, I was afraid, because never before had I understood. Do you understand me? It was the spectre of death which had passed so close to me. You remember the horsemen of the Apocalypse.

That is exactly it, cried *Mère Aumône.*

My legs were trembling so hard that I could not stand up and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could breathe, owing to the rapid palpitations of my heart. I felt as though I could go no farther. Saying to myself, maybe I too will fade away like the white cavaliers and be lost forever? But I regained my strength fortunately, realizing that this was not the time for delay. I was too much imbued with the thought of their return. I started to walk as quickly as possible, retracing your tracks once again, and here I am:

You were lucky indeed, remarked the guide.

Lucky?

Yes indeed, my young man, no one should ever attempt to cross that pass after the sun is up. And moreover one should always have a guide, a good guide, because then there can be no cause for fear.

After this long narration, Abbé Régis ordered a good bottle of wine, but the group soon dispersed, as the young students had risen at a very early hour and Veyrier was only too eager to bid them all goodnight. But just as the priest was

about to leave, *Mère Aumône* grasped his arm, and said:

I am waiting for you, Monsieur l'Abbé.

And what for, my good woman?

For confession.

But it is very late and surely your sins can't weigh so heavily upon you. Tomorrow morning.

No, no, Monsieur l'Abbé, I will no longer be here.

Are you leaving us?

Exactly—

I was alone during all this conversation, as the young people had already retired to the granary. The priest, even though he was very much fatigued, listened to the confession of the old woman.

The next day just as I was about to fasten my sack on my back, prior to my descent through Bozel and Brides, the good Champoulet rushed into my room exclaiming loudly, Ah!, Monsieur, something very sad has occurred!

And what may that be?

She passed away this very night.

I had already guessed it. His mother, *Mère Aumône,* was dead.

How is it possible, he cried. It is too difficult to realize, only last night she was as active and talkative as usual. She retired to a room in which two beds had been placed, one for her and the other one for my two daughters. The younger one did not hear anything, because at that age one sleeps very soundly. It was my wife who broke the sad news to me, saying, "Your mother has not gotten up yet, and she is always up for mass. I will go and see." Upon reaching the room I heard her call for help. The poor old woman was dead— I followed them into her room and there she lay in death's grip, but her pallor was no more accentuated than in life. Her face wore a smile; in fact, there were no evidences of any struggle or suffering—on the contrary her expression was one of infinite peace—the peace earned after the day is done. Madame Champoulet had already begun to rearrange the room, placing a candle on either side and at the foot

of the bed a small table with holy water and a branch of boxwood.

The news of this sudden death spread rapidly through the little village. And just then a neighbor woman entered.

It is *Mère Jeanne,* whispered the innkeeper's wife. I was acquainted with her and knew that she was much more inclined to gossip than was her old friend *Mère Aumône.* But they resembled one another in one thing; that was their extreme piety. The death of her lifelong friend did not seem to affect her very deeply and after offering up a prayer, she set about to make herself useful.

This is a very sad loss, I remarked to her.

Oh! you know, every one in his turn, Monsieur, and it was the wish of Marie Favre, my old friend whom you know by the name of Dame Champoulet, to offer her soul for the salvation of another.

For the salvation of another?

Yes, Monsieur, you will recall the sad fate of those three young people who met such a tragic death at Becca Motta, only about a week ago. Two lads and a young girl, they were mere children of seventeen and eighteen years of age. Travelling alone, without any guide. She prayed at this very time to be permitted to offer her soul as a sacrifice, in order to save someone in the mountains who was in danger.

This tragedy caused much comment all through the valley and no doubt was discussed also at Champagny.

In order to save the soul of someone in danger, I repeated to myself, very much perplexed—

Yes for one of those poor unfortunates, alone in the mountains without a guide. It was only at noon yesterday that *Mère Aumône* said to me "A long long time ago, I told you, Jeanne, there was someone in danger. This is the moment for prayer." And we stopped by the roadside and prayed, and then she said— "It will be this very evening. And I wish to see a priest." I proposed going to see M. le Curé, but she replied, he is not there, he left for Bozel and is not expected to return before tomorrow—I must see another. And then this abbé came with his group of happy students.

It was with curiosity and emotion that I listened to her. Had she the power to make of herself a substitute?

Take me, good Lord, she prayed, I am old and have lived my life, and spare the lives of those youths. She was offering this prayer at the precise hour when the terrible avalanche occurred. Had she had a presentiment?

François Veyrier knew nothing about this— Did God accept her as his substitute?

François Veyrier finished his meal, in a happy frame of mind, amidst a crowd of interested listeners.

As the Abbé Régis sprinkled the holy water, he said that she was a noble woman, her presence sanctified the dawn and the dusk. But he did not desire to confront these young people with the grim spectre of death, and the group dispersed.

And François Veyrier never realized that the sacred offering of another soul may have been his salvation.

THE MAN WHO MARRIED HIS WIFE

By FRÉDÉRIC BOUTET

I

Emerging from the pont de l'Alma, Joseph Langlois turned into the Avenue Bosquet, deserted in the soft haze of a November night. He did not hurry for he was happy to walk, to breathe, after the too plentiful dinner, too prolonged in the smart bar which was warm, bright and animated—happy especially to relax his mind after those hours of conversation when he was forced to explain, without seeming to, his theories of art and decoration, give his ideas, outline his plans, all the while retaining an imposing appearance and remaining on guard, in order to surely conquer his questioner, the fat Maxime Duthil, cordial and prudent, snobbish and alert, who for him could mean fortune and real success at last attained.

Having passed the Ecole Militaire, Joseph Langlois turned the corner of another avenue and arrived at his door as the hour struck one. His ground-floor apartment at the left under the arch of a large modern building, was just in front of the janitor's lodging, toward which he called his name. He opened his door, crossed the hallway and entered a large room. A pink light, turned low, permitted a glimpse of a highly colored setting, spots of gold scarcely visible, shining nickel. . . . A delicate fragrance of chypre lingered.

"Is it you, Jo? . . . hello. . . . What time is it?" cried a small voice sleepily.

From a divan where she had stretched herself out in the semi-darkness, a young woman raised her head and, slipping her feet to the floor, sat up. She started to rub her eyes but stopped herself. . . .

"Hello, little one. . . . Were you sleeping?"

"Yes . . . I believe . . . I had finished everything, you see Jo, so I lay down a while."

"Poor child, you tire yourself . . . I always tell you . . ."

"No really, dear, it is nothing. Kiss me. . . ."

She got up and came over to him. He had turned on a switch and the light illumined her face. . . . A long apron, blue and white checked, covered her slender form. This domestic garment formed a curious contrast with the charming and delicate head, its grace so artificial, so studied, so made-up,—beautified or disfigured, one didn't know—after the most extreme and extravagant modernism: the hair, straw colored, fell in an abundant fringe to the slender eyebrows of the same color and along the cheeks, delicate and painted, descended straight and thick, cropped off at the nape of the neck, and on the temples formed large kiss-curls whose points reached to the corner of the eyes, eyes large and beautiful and blue, slightly glaucous, slightly myopic, of which the turned-up lashes, separated each from the other and stiffened by some beauty product intensely black, gave to her an unusual strangeness disconcerting in its effect.

"Oh, I left my apron on," she cried, confused.

She took it off and appeared in pyjamas of white satin, flowered with blue and gold, which accentuated her supple and delicate form.

"Well! What did Mr. Duthil say? Are you pleased?" she asked in a tone of anxious curiosity.

Joseph Langlois, having kissed her with loving tenderness, took off his hat and coat. He was of medium but sturdy build and in his well-fitting suit, his face full and smooth, with brown hair curling tightly about a high forehead, beneath which burned serious and penetrating eyes, he seemed scarcely thirty years old and gave the impression of intelligent energy and of an interesting and worthy personality.

"Well! Mr. Duthil is greatly interested in my work, little sweetheart. . . . We spoke at length during and after dinner. . . . It's the first time that I've been alone with him and that I could make him understand, at leisure, what I am

and what sort of decorative art I create. He is capable of understanding realities; in spite of assuming the pose of a rich and vain man, he has taste. . . . But, my dear, I am tired. . . . Suppose we go to bed? And then I'll tell you all about it."

"Wait a little, will you, Jo? The pot roast isn't quite done," objected the young woman in a matter-of-fact tone. "I must go see. . . ."

Joseph Langlois received this communication without surprise. He lit a cigarette and threw himself into his armchair as his companion entered the next room, from which emanated a faint odour of soup, and a combination of chypre perfume and the scent of tobacco.

"In a quarter of an hour it will be done," she said coming back. "So, Jo, you hope that Mr. Duthil? . . . *Mon Dieu!* how happy I'd be . . ."

"Don't go too fast, little Zita. . . ."

"Oh no, Jo! call me Germaine when we're alone. . . . When you say Zita, it doesn't seem that you're speaking to me. . . . Just as I am not yet accustomed to recognize myself as I am, when I look in the glass . . ."

"What a child! . . . Anyway Mr. Duthil, as I was saying, wants me to design two or three pieces of furniture for him and to superintend the making. This is only a beginning. He wishes to see what I'm capable of doing. I believe he is disposed to put a large sum into an enterprise which interests him. . . . If he is pleased with what I do for him, if he sees, after knowing me better, that he can have confidence in me, he will certainly finance me . . ."

"Oh! Jo, Jo, how wonderful that would be! . . ."

"Yes, but I mustn't hurry him nor try to impress him, nor give him the slightest reason for suspicion, nor have the appearance of needing his support. He isn't stingy but he has been taken in two or three times, and that's annoyed him. Besides, he is advised by his sister, who has a great deal of influence over him. . . ."

"Ah, he has a sister?"

"Yes, the baronne Doriga, a Duthil by birth, older than he and even richer . . . married, divorced, remarried, redivorced, . . . lovers . . . all sorts of adventures . . . now settled, virtuous, severe. . . . She lives with her brother in the magnificent house that I showed you on the Avenue du Bois. . . . He sees only through her. . . . It is she that I must please if I wish to get on with Duthil. . . . I'm to have dinner at her house next week. . . . In the meantime, he is coming here to see me day after tomorrow at three o'clock. . . . Officially so that I can show him my plans and so that he can see my furniture. . . . In reality, I believe to find out especially, my way of living. . . . He is as curious as an old cat."

"Day after tomorrow, at three o'clock. . . . That's all right. Everything will be clean and ready. . . . But, tell me, should I be here? . . . Should he see me? . . ."

Joseph Langlois considered.

"No, not when he arrives. You go out before, but come in about a quarter of four, as though you weren't expected. . . . That will be the best. . . . He will be flabbergasted by your beauty. . . . You will affect your distant manner. . . . You know. . . ."

"I'll do my best. . . . You can be sure, Jo," she said in a small voice, slightly dejected. . . .

"Listen, dear," he began after a short silence, "Mr. Duthil wished to come tomorrow. . . . I wouldn't have it. . . . Do you know why? . . . Because tomorrow is the seventeenth of November, and the seventeenth of November, four years ago . . ."

"Oh, Jo! Our wedding anniversary! How sweet you are to have remembered it this year in the midst of all your affairs! . . . I remembered all right . . . but . . . Well then, we'll be together all day? . . . We'll go to the country, won't we?"

"To the country in November? . . ."

"That doesn't matter, it's fine weather. . . . Or we'll stay in Paris, it doesn't matter a bit . . . but together all day.

. . . Oh, how kind you are to have thought of it! . . ."

"I even brought you a little trinket. . . . Oh, nothing much. . . ."

He pulled from his pocket a little package which contained an enamel bracelet. The young woman clapped her hands, enraptured, sat down on her husband's knees and kissed him.

"How dear you are! How happy I am! . . . Oh, Mon Dieu, the pot-roast! . . ."

She ran into the next room, then returned.

"There, I've put out the gas. The roast will be fine. . . . Now we can retire."

And she started to undo the cushions of the divan which were pillows under decorative slip covers.

II

Joseph Langlois had been born in Grenoble thirty six years and two months ago. His father, professor of mathematics in high-school, and his mother, small-dowered daughter of an official, decided that one child was quite enough and contented themselves with him. Joseph was ten years old when Mr. Langlois was appointed to a high-school in Paris, where the family, including the old cook, was transported. Not rich, overcome and worried at living "in the capitol," the Langlois settled in the rue de l'Abbé-Grégoire, in a cheap apartment containing a parlor, a tiny dining room, a larger bedroom and another curious room, almost triangular, which became the study of Mr. Langlois. Joseph slept in the hall. His folding bed was concealed by a drapery and he washed in the kitchen. He had a horror of this demi-poverty. Still a child, he dreamed of splendid decorations and of a well appointed home. He grew up intelligent and industrious. His parents, proud of him, discussed his future. The father wished him to be scientific like himself; the mother, whose romanticism had been suppressed throughout her entire life, wished him to be an artist. A middle course prevailed: they decided that Joseph should be an architect. The same year that he en-

tered school, his father died. Their resources dwindled. They sent away the servant, strong Picarde, who had replaced the Grenobloise.

Madam Langlois, her husband dead, lived for her son. Joseph had inherited the triangular office and worked there with redoubled energy, but architecture didn't suffice. He aspired to creations more living, more colorful, more personal and intimate. . . . When he left school he was employed by a well-known architect. Gloomy years passed during which he strove to find himself and followed conglomerate artistic studies.

Sent to Tours to superintend the repairing of a Château, he met in the Château a young girl, Germaine Lavigne, an orphan, pretty and well brought up. She was the companion of a cranky old relative. Joseph loved her and she returned his love passionately. He married her in Tours and, his work being finished, he returned with her to his mother's home in Paris, rue de l'Abbé Grégoire, where the parlor was turned into a bedroom for them.

One year . . . two years. . . . Life for Joseph was less tedious because of love, more irritating because of the time which passed too rapidly. He had decided on his career: decorative art, and he planned, designed and was happy in his work. But how to make himself known? . . . How to find success, notoriety, fortune? . . . He studied this problem; he tried to discover the laws of social success and how to apply them in his case. . . . He confided only in his young wife. She loved and admired him, and owing to the illness of Madam Langlois, she assumed entire charge of the house.

Old Madam Langlois died. . . . When the first days of mourning were over, Joseph said to his wife, one evening after dinner:

"My dear, I have something very serious to explain to you. You will understand, I'm sure. We can't go on living this way, it leads to nothing. While my poor mother lived, it was impossible to do anything. To leave her would have been unthinkable, abominable. . . . Now, we're free. . . . You

know that I want to succeed, to be celebrated and to make money for you and for me . . . I'm thirty-four years old, I can't wait any longer. . . ."

"But what do you want to do, Jo?"

"We must change our way of living completely. . . . How can I succeed when we live in the rue de l'Abbé Grégoire in a respectable and miserable little apartment with oak furniture, old hangings and no servants' staircase? . . . I'd be ashamed to receive anyone here. . . . How can I succeed when my wife has no clothes, no jewelry, when I myself am not elegant, when the very fact that I am the head of a small establishment like this gives people the impression that I'm incapable, and makes them invite us to dinner once or twice a year out of pity. I understand life, you see—you must throw powder in people's eyes. . . . So listen: first, we're going to leave this place. That'll be, with certain economies, an investment. I can have a ground-floor apartment near the Invalides, a smart location. One of my friends, an officer who is leaving for the colonies, is letting me have it. I can establish myself there as I wish, after my own taste, in an imposing setting of my own, modern and artistic . . . I can fix myself up in bachelor quarters."

With a cry of desperation, Germaine threw herself into his arms.

"Jo, do you want to leave me?"

"Of course not, dear, how silly you are! . . . I won't leave you at all. . . . But for everybody else you will be . . . my little friend . . . my mistress. . . . We'll have a life mysterious and amusing. . . . No one will know if we're married or not. . . . No one knows you except the little bourgeois in this awful place. We'll leave here without giving an address, saying that I'm going on a trip. . . . Or better still, we can take a little trip to the south, if you like. We'll come back made over . . . I'll be ready for the struggle . . . I'll leave my job and tell my boss and friends that I'm starting out for myself in decorative art. I'll associate with everyone who can be useful. I'm through living like a bear. . . ."

"But me . . . Jo . . . me? . . . You know I'll do what-

ever you wish. . . . But think: I'll not be your wife any longer. It won't be the same any more. . . ."

"Yes, between us two it will be the same. . . . It's for the world. . . . It isn't because of bohemian snobbishness. . . . Try to understand, little girl, it's a question of budget. . . . Yes, really! . . ."

"But the expenses will be the same! . . ."

"Yes, even a little greater. . . . Only we'll be well dressed instead of shabby. . . . Think: a bachelor can be smart without servants if he has a tuxedo, well-fitting clothes, a presentable place to live in, and a well-gowned mistress. . . . A conventional household . . . think: apartment, service, receptions, invitations to send out, clothes for madame, etc., etc., . . . a bachelor's life costs nothing in comparison. . . . So what I ask of you is to sacrifice yourself a little for our future and to accept this secret existence. . . . You see, no one will even know that you live with me. You'll be a fashionable young woman who is my little friend. You'll be transformed, you'll see. You'll be just delightful, an honor to me. . . . And after a few years, when I've succeeded and am known, I'll say that I'm settling my affair with you, that I'm marrying you. . . . We'll leave for a little trip and when we come back I'll present you as my wife. . . . No one will know . . ."

He talked long, ardently, eloquently, and Germaine let herself be persuaded. For that matter, he could have persuaded her to do almost anything.

III

Two months later, in the apartment in the boulevard des Invalides where Joseph Langlois, artist decorator, had just installed himself, Germaine, the simple provincial with severe clothes, transparent complexion, pale invisible eyebrows, heavy blond chignon, discreet and unobtrusive beauty, had become Zita, the extravagant and charming modern doll that we have seen rise from the divan in a checkered apron and satin pyjamas to prepare the roast.

The apron and the pot roast. . . . Yes. Germaine was willing to assume the air, as Joseph wished, of a queer, taciturn little friend, dancer maybe and probably a cocaine user. She was willing to go out when he wanted to receive guests alone—to come back if he thought it better that they should see her. . . . She was willing to wear the same outfit during all seasons, a suit made by a good tailor, but economical because she never wore anything else even though it was a trifle cold in winter and a trifle hot in summer. She was willing to eat at odd hours—eleven in the morning—after the maid, who came for an hour each day as a matter of principle, had gone—nine thirty in the evening—so that they could be out during the hours when Paris dined and that no one would ever know that every day she and Jo, when he wasn't invited out, ate at home. . . . She had accepted everything else, but her natural domestic instincts, fortified by a mother, expert in the domestic arts, refused to let her agree on the question of cleaning the apartment and of the quality of the food. With a passion for cleanliness and order, she swept and rubbed with all her might during the hours that she was sure no one would come. Between times, she washed her linen and blouses, sewed and mended. She did the marketing in distant and different places, slyly avoiding meeting anyone, and brought back meats and vegetables in a music roll which strengthened the neighbors' idea that she was connected in some way with the theatre. At night, when it mattered little if an odour of cooking filled the place, she would prepare familiar dishes—chicken with rice, veal and peas—which could be discreetly reheated the next day. In this way the digestion of the well-beloved Jo was preserved from endless ham and eggs and the concoctions of cheap restaurants. This was a great comfort to Germaine in the midst of the wonders and inconveniences of her new life, to which she adapted herself with difficulty.

Just as Joseph Langlois had transformed and modernized Germaine, so had he created a suggestive setting.

His quarters, at the same time practical and "artist," must interest eventual clients.

There was a grey vestibule ornamented with appliquéd red peonies (the effect was rather commonplace and Langlois was not satisfied with it) and furnished with a hat rack and a wooden chest for fuel. This entrance led into a large studio (two rooms from which the partition had been removed) with royal-blue walls decorated in motifs of dull gold and crystal: a low divan flanked to left and right by table and bookcase; a large flat desk of colonial wood, streaked and adorned with nickel, as were a rectangular stand and a large, complicated but practical wardrobe with open shelves above for books and vases and with drawers below, at each side of which was a high door; two deep comfortable armchairs, royal-blue like the walls, the carpet, and the divan striped with white fur—the whole effect was unpretentious and harmonious. A last room, a big kitchen, was to all appearances a bath room, in blue and white mosaic, provided with enamelled tub and shower. Ingenious camouflage ennobled the stove and the sink, into a dressing table. There was a little cupboard lacquered white and a chest whose cover formed a long seat.

IV

Joseph Langlois sat down on this bench with an eagerness prompted by anxiety. Mr. Maxime Duthil, visiting his establishment, was in the kitchen with him and the artist feared that this important man, curious and at ease, might open the chest in which were the carrots and potatoes, put there during the morning by Germaine—the tell-tale discovery of which would have had a disastrous effect.

"It is charming," Mr. Duthil declared, when he had looked about him. "It is charming and complete . . . practical, attractive . . . As to the big room, it is marvelous. . . ."

They left the kitchen to return to the studio. Joseph Langlois offered his guest an oriental cigarette and Mr. Duthil, sunk in an armchair, smoked peacefully: the setting pleased him, he liked the artist, and he continued to voice his approval. . . .

"I am amazed, my dear sir. . . . You have made a charming interior. . . . One could not wish for a better one. . . . It is really ideal for a bachelor . . ."

"Yes, for a bachelor," Joseph said negligently, "it is sufficient. I am comfortably fixed here for work . . . I am especially satisfied with my studio. . . . I had some difficulty finding the formula but . . ."

"Your wardrobe is perfect; it enchants the eye with its logical and well-balanced lines. . . . The doors at the left and right? . . ."

"Clothes. . . . The shelves in the middle, linen and ties. . . . I live here most of the time. I have everything I need—my books, drawings, telephone . . ."

"Ah, how happy you are! Free from all worries, free to consecrate yourself to your beautiful work . . ."

The sound of a key was heard and the door opened slightly. Germaine appeared in suit and hat. Langlois pretended to be surprised, almost displeased.

"Well; it's you, my dear . . . I didn't expect you . . ."

He presented them: "Mr. Duthil—Mademoiselle Zita."

Mr. Duthil bowed, at the same time considering the gracious feminine phenomenon that Germaine had succeeded in producing. She had taken off her coat and hat. She sat down, silently, and lit a cigarette, but rose to give them port when Langlois asked her to. Without saying a word, she poured the golden wine into the tulip-shaped glasses, then sat down again on the divan without taking part in any way in the conversation of the two men. She took a rose from a metal vase and smelled it.

"I love roses," she said to Mr. Duthil, who watched her with an interest that he did his best to hide. And those were the only words she spoke.

"It's your little friend?" Mr. Duthil breathed, when he found himself alone with Joseph Langlois in the vestibule.

"Yes, a nice child, good, and much attached to me . . . rather taciturn and original, but really sincere. . . ."

"She is exquisite: such style. . . . She seems to adore you. . . . Ah, my friend, your establishment is complete. . . .

I see that you are one of those people who know how to accept fortune. . . . I am delighted to know you. I shall be delighted to know you better. . . . Don't forget that we're having dinner together Monday in the Avenue du Bois. . . . We'll decide on my furniture. . . . My sister wants to have some also. . . . You're so talented. . . . Believe me, the future is yours. . . . Goodnight, until Monday. . . ."

"I was all right, wasn't I, Jo?" Germaine asked like a child seeking approval, when her husband rejoined her.

V

Months passed. People began to speak of the decorator Joseph Langlois. The furniture designed for Mr. Duthil and for the baronne Doriga had brought him some orders, but he had not yet attained the notoriety nor the fortune that he wished to attain.

He lacked the opportunity to expand, to put into execution his new ideas. His hope was in Mr. Duthil, of whom he saw a great deal, either when he went to the Avenue du Bois or when Mr. Duthil came to his studio. . . . And Mr. Duthil came most willingly . . .

One night, after having dined in the Avenue du Bois, Joseph Langlois came home very much excited. He found Germaine, under the rosy light, diligently darning a silk stocking.

"It's done!" Joseph said, "Duthil will finance me! He took me into his den after dinner and told me that he had decided . . ."

Germaine, pale with emotion under her rouge, let fall her work and threw herself into her husband's arms.

"My dear, my dear, how wonderful!"

"Wait, there is one complication. . . . Yes, on your account. . . ."

"Oh, *Mon Dieu!*"

"Listen . . . Duthil said to me 'You must excuse me if I take a great liberty but I must tell you how my sister and I feel. We will finance you together. My sister is willing, I

also. . . . We have absolute confidence in you. . . . But my sister has very severe principles. I confess that I have also. . . . Your situation is irregular. It would hinder you in your career, and it would hinder us in our relations with you. . . . Besides there is the question of morality. . . . Excuse me again. That a young man, an elegant and budding artist like you, should have a mistress . . . nothing better. . . . But a man established, who wishes to have a prominent situation . . . My dear Langlois, your young friend Zita is charming, intelligent, serious, honest and she loves you dearly . . . I can prove that. I must confess that I made love to her in order to find out. I made her some brilliant proposals . . .' "

"*Mon Dieu!* He told you that?" cried Germaine, hiding her face in her hands.

"Yes, and he added that you repulsed him with such dignity and such warmth, though so evidently afraid of turning him against me, that he was profoundly touched. He's a good man, at heart. . . . In short, he wants me to marry you. . . . He told me that I'd be acting both honestly and practically. . . ."

"Ah, Jo, Jo! but that is perfect. It is just what you wanted —to seem to fix it up with me when you had succeeded . . . *Mon Dieu,* how happy I am! We will go, as you suggested, and pretend to be married in the country. But, what is it? You don't seem pleased. . . ."

"My poor dear, the complication is more serious than you think. Not only does Duthil want me to marry you, but he wants to be our witness. . . . In that way, dignity, respectability. . . . They will be guarantee of your virtue. . . . They will receive you in their home and present you with satisfaction. . . . The marriage will be their work. . . . I couldn't say no. . . ."

"But, Jo, when we're already married, we can't do it. . . . Listen, just tell Mr. Duthil the truth. . . ."

"Never! Why, think a minute! . . . What kind of a liar and a cad he'd think me if I told him I'd made my wife play the rôle of my mistress. . . . He'd never understand my

reasons. . . . You know me, dear, and you understood. . . . That would finish me as far as he was concerned. . . . He'd have no further confidence in me; he'd never finance me. . . . Tell everybody about it, too, I suppose. . . . And his old magpie-shrew of a sister. . . . No, they want to assist in our marriage so we must get married . . . that's all!"

"But Jo, it's ridiculous."

"We must, our future is at stake. We must choose between success and sure failure. . . . We must get married! . . ."

Agitated, he marched up and down the room.

"But Jo, you'd be a bigamist. . . . You can be condemned for bigamy. . . . Wait, I'll look in the dictionary. . . ."

"No, No! I won't be a bigamist if I marry the same woman. . . . How can it hurt us? In the first place, no one will ever know anything about it. . . . We were married in Tours a long time ago. . . . And I'm sure there's no law which forbids a man to marry his own wife a second time. Divorced couples can remarry, can't they? . . ."

"But we aren't divorced."

"No matter! We'll fix up the papers and get married as soon as possible, with Duthil and the old Doriga as witnesses. We must, I tell you, Germaine! We must. . . . Even if it is a risk. . . ."

"Why not consult a lawyer?"

"I'd look like a fool. . . . And there might be some slip-up. . . . No, we can't hesitate: it's possible, so let's do it. . . . Well, little Germaine, how about it? . . ."

She threw herself into his arms, suddenly sobbing.

"I am too happy. . . . I never told you but it hurt me not to seem to be your wife any more! . . . Oh, Jo, you'll be twice my husband. How funny! . . ."

VI

The prosperity of the couple dated from this second union which took place shortly after. The "Artistic Home" of Joseph Langlois became the fashion. Zita, once again Ger-

maine, enjoyed quite a social success, but remained simple, devoted and loving.

"She is charming, really charming . . . well brought up, discreet and tactful," the baronne said of her with kindly condescension. And then aside to her brother:

"Really one must know her past, as we do, to realize that she used to be a mere adventuress."

THE COCHEREL CIRCUS

By ROMAIN COOLUS

Huge striped red and yellow posters bedaubed the walls of the little county town with a blur of vermillion and topaz. Their violent hues stunned the eye, as the next day, on the occasion of the annual fair of the region, the parade, reinforced by the throbs and wailing of drums and trombones, would deafen the ear. These truculent posters announced a daring tight-rope walker, a troop of sensational ring flyers, two lady bareback riders,—not overburdened with lore in spite of their "high school" training,—a Japanese juggler, musical clowns capable of transforming poles and railings into melodious instruments, acrobats whose bodies flung forward at full speed turned into wheels of flesh about a horizontal rod, sinister in its immobility, trapezists in a paroxysm of aerial politeness holding out hands to each other across space and shaking them as if courtesy, raised to these heights, was but a proof of good breeding; in fact, all the regular band, the traditional and carefree outfit of a travelling circus.

A boy of about sixteen or seventeen years of age stood in front of one of these posters. He was not merely reading it, he was drinking it in; he was not merely looking at it, but was photographing it on his heart. Suddenly, instead of turning down the rue de la Mouline where his parents and several tasks were probably awaiting him, tasks that might perhaps in six months make a full-fledged graduate of this young man, he began to run toward the Mall, where stakes were already being driven around some piled-up benches and poles, which as a prelude to adventure were soon to hold up the much travelled circus canvas.

"Monsieur Cocherel, please?"

"What do you want?" grumbled a workman, his mouth tingling with nails.

"I've got to speak to him. It's very important."

A blackened, tobacco stained finger pointed a few yards away to a smart looking gentleman in a grey waistcoat, whose far-away gaze was possibly peering into an imaginary paradise of fabulous gate receipts.

André Fagelot timidly approached this personage, Jove-like, dignified and mysterious in his capacity as director of a travelling show. He addressed him with the courtesy that came naturally to one of his middle class upbringing,—for his father was one of the most important business men of the county. He explained the object of his visit, the audacity of which he, as a matter of fact, was the first to realize. He wished to join the celebrated troop, to be engaged for the trapeze or horizontal bar, to go away with him and his circus family when he pulled up stakes and left the Mall, and this dull little town where he was living out a joyless and repressed youth. He had references: he was the champion of the school gymnasium, and his much envied muscles had gained him the post of monitor. For the last few years he had never missed a performance of the Cocherel circus. With fixed attention he had followed the most dangerous feats of the gymnasts. Since then he had tried them all; and he had conquered them all with ease. What attracted him to this profession was not just a whim, but an irresistible vocation, which had been consuming him ever since his first success on the trapeze. Moreover, he called attention to the nobility of the profession, and he could not conceive of any more fascinating use for his virile activity. The risk attracted him. In this dangerous game where any infinitesimal error in calculation and the slightest distraction, even for a second, were paid for in broken bones, there was a sort of heroism that gave the career a prestige not to be found in the commercial and political life which his unambitious family had planned for him; and as a singer requests a hearing from the director of an opera, he begged Monsieur Cocherel to grant him a *seeing*.

Without a single interruption Monsieur Cocherel listened to this plea palpitating with longing and hope. His keen, ex-

perienced eyes never left the young man. However the latter put forth his arguments, his only outward sign was to move over from the right to the left side of his mouth a big cigar that he had lighted at the beginning of the interview, and which was burning capriciously.

But at the very moment that Monsieur Cocherel was about to answer (God! What would the answer be? How a young fellow's heart missed beats when his whole future depended upon a word), there rushed up a young girl, who had evidently been hidden behind one of the big motor caravans strung professionally along the Mall.

"I say, Papa. . . . Oh, excuse me."

"What do you want, Rolande?"

"Later on, you are busy. Later on."

And she ran away with the savage grace of a young animal. Short as it was, this apparition ought to have made a memorable impression on anybody; for she was fascinating, was Rolande Cocherel, with her luminous, clear gaze, her short locks, blond as a Scandinavian's, which shook about her head like a flame of revolt, and her manner of skipping, revealing the inherited suppleness of her joyous, muscular body.

But André had not looked at her. He had not looked at her because he had not seen her; had he even heard her? The circumference of his psychic horizon was the rounded tip of that simmering cigar.

And Monsieur Cocherel, aware of everything going on in this odd candidate's soul, hid a smile, for he well realized the *absence* of his interlocutor in the presence of this girl of whom he was so proud, and whose striking beauty justified his pride.

"Well," he answered, "I ask nothing better than to see you prove your talent. Vocations are rare in our profession. When one meets them, especially with this enthusiasm, it would be poor policy on our part to discourage them. What time can you come tomorrow morning? I'll try you out."

"At half past ten, after school," answered young Fagelot, scarlet with the certainty of his success.

"All right. Tomorrow, half past ten. The bars and trapeze will be in place. I'll be waiting for you."

And throwing across the Mall his extinct cigar, whose funereal track André mechanically followed with his eyes, he held out a kindly, athletic hand to the young man, who took it with emotion.

It would be useless to describe the night passed by our gymnastic candidate. There is no mistress more agitating than a secret, especially when, materialized as a nightmare, it perches on your chest like a sphinx and persistently plunges its insidious pupils into yours.

It would also be useless to describe the classes in school just preceding the decisive trial. Fagelot got a bad mark; Fagelot was threatened with being sent out of the room. Fagelot received a warning. The most precise questions he answered, when he did answer, in the most evasive manner. His distraction had all the appearance of an avowal, if only the professor could have guessed the drama that was being enacted in the back of that obstinate head, behind those impatient eyes which tried to stare the hands of the clock into quicker revolutions.

At last the bell rang. The scholars left school with the noisy agility of bees escaping from a hive, and their cries broke the silence of the monotonous little town.

André left his comrades to their amusements; then like an Indian on the trail he reached, through a labyrinth of sleepy streets, the still deserted Mall.

The circus rose up before him. In one night expert hands had put together the heap of stakes, bolts, ropes and canvas. Slightly swaying in the morning wind, it good naturedly displayed its temporary rotundity.

André rushed up, raised a corner of the tent, and entered.

Monsieur Cocherel was sitting on a bench. A cigar, possibly lighted by the rays of the rising sun, was slowly burning between his lips. On the rows above, three men, clean shaven, were sitting side by side. Clowns, perhaps, acrobats anxious to witness the trial, or idle grooms? But what did it matter

to our Fagelot? He was sure of his strength, sure of his skill, sure of his luck. Whatever this unexpected jury might be, he knew the verdict in advance.

In the ring the rigging was waiting, quiet and placid like the old instruments of torture, shining with the certainty of its metallic superiority over the failing will power of men.

Nevertheless, throwing off his coat and tightening his trousers with a leather belt, André jumped right at the trapeze; after a few perilous springs, the prelude, as it were, of his acrobatic poem, he forced a quicker movement and threw himself into the lyricism of high vaulting.

As the minutes passed the three spectators seemed glued to their seats. Was it admiration, or disdain for this amateurish improvisation? Suddenly there was the sound of applause; but it came neither from the hands of Monsieur Cocherel, nor from the three acolytes perched above. From some obscure corner some one had seen and become enthusiastic; while during his turning, spiralling, springing and regaining his hold, André was vaguely conscious of a little blond flame that disappeared like a fairy light behind a heavy curtain.

Drenched in glorious perspiration which he mopped with his handkerchief, André returned from space, and joyously kicked the insulting sawdust mattress which had seemed to expect his fall. He felt as light and almost as immaterial as a feather; an aerial something still seemed to refine his muscles; they had not yet become earthy again.

Monsieur Cocherel rose and came to meet him; but at the same time he must have opened his mouth, for the cigar, like an over-ripe fruit, had fallen from it.

"No use wasting a lot of time," he said. "You have the vocation. I'm not much good at compliments, but if I don't admit that you have amazed me, I should not consider myself fit to run the oldest and most important travelling concern. You have a magnificent career ahead of you. I should say that you were destined to hold the fickle attention of crowds. When a young man has already attained such mastery, it's a good omen for his success. Do you want to leave here with us? I'd like nothing better than to take you along and enroll

you in my troop. You can make your début next week at Lons-le-Saunier. As to wages, a thousand francs a month right away. But if you make good, you'll have a hundred francs each performance. And it's quite possible that your income will follow your rise, and like you, do acrobatic stunts."

André, choking with joy, could only burst into tears.

"Pull yourself together," Monsieur Cocherel added smilingly. "A sporting champion shouldn't carry on like a girl. I can't remember having said anything disagreeable. By the way, how old are you?"

"Seventeen in three months."

"Oh the devil! A minor! You must know that I have to have your father's authorization. He has probably consented?"

"He doesn't know anything about it."

"Christ! And you believe . . ."

"I'm afraid he's got the most absurd class objections against our profession."

"Try to win him over. I want you for your sake and mine. If not, to my great regret we'll have to wait until you come of age."

And, as he was taking leave: "I forgot to tell you that you were performing in front of the Barringtons. They didn't look at all pleased, which is the best compliment a strong young man like you could get."

André, overcome by happiness and anxiety, disappeared behind the last elm on the Mall. Monsieur Cocherel, approaching one of the caravans, hailed his daughter.

"You are bold, Mademoiselle Rolande," he said in a voice that he tried to make severe. "You not only sneak into the circus without my permission, but with an impudence forbidden by our profession, you attract attention to yourself by a manifestation quite out of place."

"I was carried away, Papa."

"So was I. Yet I refrained from conveying my impression. Do you want the Barringtons to leave us this very night? Do

you think that your equestrian exercises alone will bring us in enough gate money?"

"I beg your pardon, Papa. I didn't think of that. The clapping, in spite of me, broke out in my hands like a grenade."

"I'll forgive you this time. But don't begin again."

Monsieur Arsène Fagelot did not look his fifty years. A heavy business man, tall, just turning grey, with abundant healthy energy, it was easy to see where his eldest son inherited his powerful physique. But it was also quite evident that as head of an enterprise, he was not the man to allow anybody to dispute his orders, nor as head of the family, to permit any one to contradict his ideas.

André found himself launched into this adventure by a sort of exteriorization of himself, by one of those tyrannical impulsions ready to hurdle all obstacles, not even recognizing them, because everything at first had gone so smoothly. But as soon as he slowly reached the rue de la Mouline, profiting by this breathing space to collect his ideas momentarily, he began to realize the difficulty of the rôle that he was about to play. He loved his father very much, but also feared him. No keen effort of concentration was required to guess the kind of reception his project would have. He was about to hurl himself against a formal opposition, punctuated by bursts of impressive anger. The mere announcement of his resolution would break off diplomatic relations; putting it into execution would constitute a declaration of war. If he should have the nerve to continue, it would certainly mean breaking off altogether with his family and, although he was only an infinitesimal part of it, with society itself. André thought that he was strong enough to bear all the consequences of his decision; yet he felt a qualm when he pictured his mother's grief. He adored her in a simple, frank way, with an obscure desire to compensate her for everything that she must have suffered from the unflinching authority of his father. He foresaw that confronted with her grief he would

scarcely have the courage of his courage, suddenly turned into a form of cruelty. That was the stumbling block. He was capable of facing the paternal anger; it would only strengthen his will, and besides, it was to be expected. Man against man. But the mute maternal despair! Would he be able to resist it? He must at all price avoid this.

And then, after much reflection, he decided to remain silent. The Cocherel troop would not leave for two days. He would secretly prepare for flight, and manage to slip into the convoy at the last minute, revealing his presence only when on the road, and far enough away for it to be impossible to send him back; in fact, when it would be too late for Monsieur Cocherel to act. The rupture consummated, he knew his father too well not to be sure that he would refuse to open the family door to him again, and that he would not attack the director of the circus so as not to increase the scandal. This anarchistic solution seemed so clever and wise that he dined with a good appetite and surprised the whole table by his cheerfulness. He was astonished at times, however, to surprise a melancholy look in his mother's eyes.

Nine o'clock the next morning. School was pursuing its ordinary routine. Monsieur Parizel, professor of rhetoric, was initiating his young pupils into the secrets of Latin letters.

Suddenly the door opened. The headmaster, in an oddly administrative manner, entered. "André Fagelot," he said severely. André, shaken by this abrupt summons, got up, followed by a parallel line of heads all turned simultaneously toward the luminous rectangle of the open door, where Authority was framed. But behind the scholastic chief André had already perceived the tall silhouette of his father. A quite natural fear seized him. What was the meaning of this interruption? What necessity justified it?

Without a single word the two men led him, like policemen escorting a prisoner, to the head office. The silence made a painful impression on André; he walked along in a sort of trance, as if he were mentally handcuffed.

The headmaster, like a justice of the peace, sat down.

André remained standing before a large table bearing heavy pyramids of notebooks. His father walked ponderously up and down the room. The silence was prolonged until it became intolerable. Monsieur Fagelot suddenly broke it into a thousand pieces like a glass thrown furiously to the ground.

"So you want to make a clown of yourself!" he cried with pent-up violence.

"Why, Father . . ."

"That will do. Follow me."

A new tide of silence. Rapid strides accelerated by reciprocal emotion. The streets were eaten up, as it were. André passed through them without even seeing them, in a sort of stupor. Where was his father taking him?

But all at once the Mall and the circus rose up in front of him. It had taken on considerable importance since the day before. It looked as though it had been blown up with gas all night long. It had evidently been increased by the metaphysical volume representing the immense problem of human destiny.

"Monsieur Cocherel?"

"Himself, Sir."

But no cigar was obstructing the lips of the now grave and ceremonious Cocherel. Bad omen.

Monsieur Fagelot began the attack:

"I have discovered,"—how, in God's name, could he have discovered it?—"that my son wishes to become a juggler, and that he has interviewed you about entering your troop."

"Quite exact, Sir, with your permission, of course."

"Of course, and I am quite prepared to give it—provided that *it is you who ask me for it.*"

The young man's heart beat as if it would break in two.

Monsieur Cocherel's voice takes on deep tones that André does not recognize. "Your permission? No, Sir, I shall not ask for it. I shall not be a party to such foolishness. We should recruit our members only from the children of the troop. You have to be born into the profession to get along with your fellow workers and be treated well by them. I pity any one not belonging to our crowd who tries to make a place

for himself in it. He'd lead the life of an outcast. Looked upon as an intruder, he'd be the butt of his comrades, and if he had the misfortune to be more successful, he'd run the risk of regretting it bitterly some day. Accidents happen quickly. A trapeze could crack suddenly in its least expected part, and a rope thought to be absolutely strong could break. Oh, I don't want to accuse anybody; but most of my people come from God knows where. Their accents show such a mixture of different nationalities that it would be difficult to pick out any one of them. It is more than likely that they do not belong to the aristocracies of the countries that do not claim them, but which they claim, and I'd rather not say anything about their morals. What does a young Frenchman belonging to the Bourgeoisie, and to the better class Bourgeoisie,—as it is easy to see in looking at you both, my dear Sirs,—want to do in this extraordinary crowd of practical jokers, whose professional morals are not above suspicion? Believe me, my good young man, give up this idea. You are not prepared for such an abnormal life. You are leading a regular existence, lucky fellow. Keep on leading a regular existence. Take up bravely the career that your father will decide for you. Your place is here; it is not with us. When the time comes, marry a young girl of your own class, and if you still want to go in for bodily exercises, show off for her benefit on the public trapezes in the neighborhood. My advice on this subject is so determined that even if your father brought me his written permission, I'd feel obliged to tear it up before your eyes."

"Do you hear? That's enough. Thank you, Monsieur Cocherel. You are a worthy man. Come, you."

The same evening at half past eight. The family dinner had been dreary, but no allusion had been made to the morning drama. Strange: Madame Fagelot suddenly felt an irresistible longing to go to the evening performance at the circus. She declared that the Cocherel Circus was vastly superior to all the others; she was curious to see it. But Monsieur Fagelot begged to be excused; he had some important work on hand. The two younger members of the family, how-

ever, were not old enough to sit up so late. There was only André to accompany his mother.

He would have been astonished at this unforeseen desire and at the odd coincidence were he in a condition to be astonished at anything. His first instinct was to refuse, and even to do it rudely. But his mother did not seem to be aware of anything; she would have been astounded at his attitude. How could he explain it? Too wearied by the combination of emotions that he had experienced he was unable to resist this new contest. With resignation he consented to accompany his mother; and since it was so ordained that nothing was to be spared him, he prepared to submit to this new torture.

There they both were, lost in the crowd squeezed together on the benches that several hours earlier had witnessed his vain exploits. They ought to have recognized him, but their canvas covering was steeled to the basest ingratitude, and if they groaned, it was only on account of the weight of the spectators. This mediocre exhibition may have pleased the shopkeepers and gardeners of the little town; but the only effect that it had on André, already a professional, was an expression of disdain.

But now, standing on a prancing horse, a young girl was galloping around the ring. In her spangled costume beneath the bright lights she expressed graceful strength and youth itself. The breeze caused by the swiftness of her horse's gait raised her short hair, making a halo around her head. Who was she? The program informed him. Truly and for the first time he discovered her. *He had never seen her before.*

And while he devoured this dazzling apparition with his eyes, he realized that he was being watched with persistent attention. He turned his head slightly, meeting his mother's eyes, which seemed to pierce right through his own.

"Yes, Rolande Cocherel," she said to him in a muffled voice, brimming with emotion. "Come on, admit it, bad boy, it was for her sake, to follow her, that you wanted to leave us?"

All the innocence of the world was reflected in André's

face, which expressed the frankest astonishment. Could one be misunderstood to such a degree? It was adding insult to injury, after paralyzing his vocation, to slander the act that would have made of him a sort of sculptor of space, and aerial poet. His mother, handicapped by her sex in the realm of specific explanation, could only interpret it as a vulgar love adventure. If he had been more informed and less provincial, André would doubtless have recognized in this unjustified imputation the underlying basis of Freudian laws and would have been able to disentangle what this uncalled for accusation betrayed of unavowed jealousy. But he confined himself to protesting by a movement of his head which he prolonged mechanically, while a singular intuition seized him. In fact he had just remembered the short vision of the day before, while he was turning in dizzy heights in the deserted circus; the unexpected clapping of hands, the flash and disappearance of a flame. He guessed that the too vehement enthusiasm of the young girl had worried Monsieur Cocherel. He remembered his strange words: "When the time comes, marry a young girl of your own class." This good travelling man had probably been afraid that the enthusiasm would be contagious, and he had acted in such a way as to prevent the result that he feared. Therefore, unknown to him, as soon as he had left for school, he had gone that very morning to see his parents and all three had plotted to stop this absurd romance at the very start. But to whom did Cocherel intend to give this radiant girl?

Years passed. André, now an engineer, had taken his father's place and was carrying on his work. He was now the director of the factory. He had grown powerful and important. Fifteen hundred workmen under him formed the pillars of his position. President of the syndicate of County Production, André Fagelot was today economically and politically one of the biggest men of the day in his part of the world.

In the meantime he had married. His wife came from the Jura, where her father also was an important business man. But it was not only for that that he had married her. He

loved Suzanne Brechelier, who was charming, reserved, beautifully brought up, and who possessed a happy disposition. She had given him two children, a boy and a girl as simple and good as their mother. Between factory and home, between his work and his domestic happiness, his life ran smoothly and he asked nothing better of fate than to be able to continue in the monotony of this prosaic balance.

And now after so many years great red and yellow striped posters again bedaubed the walls of the little town with a blur of vermillion and topaz. The Cocherel Circus, which perhaps for itinerary reasons had not returned to this little county town, announced its sensational passage. While reading this name on the way to his office, this name which once had sounded like magic, André smiled. Heavens, how long ago it seemed, that adventure and that failure! And how young one could be, when one really was young.

But how great was his surprise when that evening his wife, reliving the maternal incident, begged him to take her to see the acrobats and the tight-rope walkers. Provincial distractions were rare. Would he refuse her this pleasure?

They were crowding in at the entrance. André and his wife stood in line to get their tickets. They were waiting their turn with the dissimulated impatience that reveals the thorough docility of the French people, the easiest in the world to govern; except perhaps once a century, when its good sense, exasperated by too great a series of unjust acts, abruptly explodes.

All at once Suzanne pinched his arm: "Look at her, look at her well, that woman distributing the tickets. I found out. She's Cocherel's daughter, that Rolande, for whom you once nearly gave up everything, your family, lessons, friends. Don't deny it, I know all about it. Your mother told me the story. If she hadn't taken you away from her, today you'd have been her husband, or her lover, and I don't congratulate you, for . . . no, just look at her! I only ask you to look at her. That is enough for me. I am revenged."

Rolande Cocherel! This heavy woman, her bust contained with difficulty by a yellow silk blouse! Rolande Cocherel, this

heavy cashier whose ringed fingers handled money, metal disks and greasy notes with nervous greed! Rolande Cocherel, this rotundity, this thickness, this cheerful commercial cynic? What man could have committed such a sacrilege as to force that poetical little flame to earn her daily bread so sordidly? To what vandal had that stupid Cocherel, always smoking his everlasting cigar, given her?

And while his wife was feeling a bit of retrospective disdain for him, André Fagelot, gathering up his change, could not keep from murmuring: "Pardon me."

But she, who doesn't understand, aggressive and even insolent:

"What! You have the wrong change? Do you take me for a thief? You ought to pay more attention, you idiot!"

And tears rushed to the eyes of this idiot.

YAMINA

By HENRI DEBERLY

I was awakened by the light peering through my window. Before me stood a messenger boy from the bar, smiling, his gold trimmed cap in his hand. His black hair glistened with pomade and he had the complexion of a girl.

What is the matter? I asked half awake, not being able to explain the presence of the messenger.

The latter smiled and answered:

It is Madame Yamina who wishes to see Monsieur.

Yamina! I cried. Has she become crazy?

I looked at my watch: it was two o'clock.

Madame Yamina, he continued, gave me ten francs— She said that she wished to see Monsieur, and added that if Monsieur refused to come that she would come herself to get you.

Is it at the bar that she is waiting for me?

Yes, Monsieur!

The boy was impatient while taking me in, wondering which would get the better of me, vice or laziness.

All right! I replied. Tell her that I will come.

The messenger boy, a bit taken back, bowed and left.

My clothes were scattered all over the floor. I fell asleep once again and awakened myself with a reproach. After this I did not waste a second, in fact in order to hasten things, I put on my coat over my night shirt.

That Yamina, how she can tempt one! Spontaneous, sensuous, at heart good, her body supple and glistening, her face homely and with fiery black eyes of a velvety texture.

She said that she was Arabian, of which one was certain after seeing the marks of invisible tatooing that gave to her forehead and cheeks an azure tint. Now tell me what city and

region you come from, and why are you in France, and at what age did you leave your country? Many of these questions she avoided answering altogether and when this seemed impossible, by way of diverting my attention, she would start babbling about other things.

One circumstance, queer and unforeseen, favoured our friendship. It was about three o'clock in the morning when we had our first rendezvous. I was awakened from a sound sleep with shooting pains. It was an attack of gout, and in a very short time I was unable to move at all without the aid of two canes; and so acutely sensitive, that if a feather happened to touch my skin it was enough to start a paroxysm of pain.

Yamina nursed me with maternal devotion. Her apartment strewn with woven mats looks like a moresque salon. I received my friends morning and evening, being merely wrapped in a kimono. My little hostess served us cool refreshing drinks and appeared herself toward four o'clock in the afternoon for a brief visit, at the end of which, she made the same little speech each day:

You will permit me, my dear, to go and try on a dress. I must go to the Catalans also to take my bath!

Yamina felt that she would be depriving Marseille of a very delightful attraction if she failed to appear in her black tights between the hour of five and six o'clock, each afternoon. Her form was superb and she was aware of it. When the hour for dinner arrived she was refreshed and happy: after which she would draw her chair quite near to mine and relate all the small gossip that she had heard. It was then time to retire and she assisted me to my bed with a tender devotion and then retired to her room.

This beautiful existence of ours was short lived, because at the end of a week I was well, but its memory, although failing in love, inspired in me a certain affection for my little nurse.

And she had the same sentiment for me after the rare days spent in one another's company.

The chirping of a bird is only annoying to those who are de-

pressed, and happily this was not my case. Yamina charmed me with her primitive ignorance, and her cheerfulness was an added charm to her beautiful French dresses. She adored the bright colors of the dance halls, and glass beads which she bought and kept at home fearing the wrath of the neighbourhood jeweler who carried only precious stones—because in truth, much like a child, she liked the glass beads better. It was only necessary on my part to express my displeasure and without further discussion she lost interest in these childish fancies.

Our friendship for one another would have taken deeper root, had I not discovered a hidden barrier. I do not know of any odour more disgusting than that of ether. This terrible vice which saps the strength and whose disgusting odour seems to hang on indefinitely. Yamina had become an addict to this terrible drug; each night she drank the contents of eight bottles, that is half of a quart. Every night a messenger appeared with the bottles. At first I tried to battle with her against this habit. Yamina would listen and seemed convinced, would give it up for forty eight hours, and then, like a savage wolf, she would take it up again. I asked her what had happened in her life that made her form such a vicious habit. She replied that she had prayed for a long time and then:

Last year when Paul left me, I suffered so intensely that I took the ether to make me forget!

I pitied her. Paul Chaigne was a fine looking fellow, rich, and, like all of the Orient, could trace his ancestry back to Marseille. His eyes were Alexandrian, his beard Assyrian and his teeth resembled the Osman, his skin smooth like that of one of the Greek Cyclades. I listened to this cubistic picture that she was painting, and could visualize without the least difficulty Paul Chaigne decorated with the palm and the head of the gazelle. Unfortunately the odour of the ether was like that of fried dates; and enraged at the thought of this terrible vice, I jumped into bed and fell asleep.

After this we had one misunderstanding after another, and after more than ten discussions, our friendship came to an end. Yamina, sobbing and twisting her hands, tried to com-

bat this horrible enemy but in vain. I did not hear from her again until the end of the next week.

As I entered the bar, I found her sitting there all alone in front of her hideous potion. She was gazing toward the door. Recognizing me, she jumped, and transfigured addressed herself to the proprietor:

You see, she cried, I was right!—I knew that he would return.

Say, he cried, how is everything going on with you?

She grasped my fingers, caressed them, threw herself on my shoulders and as her large expressive eyes met mine, she gave a kind of guttural cry which resounded with her accent.

Maybe, she replied, that I am happy!—I cannot live without you!

I begged her not to be so demonstrative.

I should care what the others think—it is my friends who will understand! Well! I lost you, and I have found you once again. Pay for that, she said, pointing to her glass.

Yamina, he murmured, and the drug?

Oh! donot speak to me of that! It disgusts me!

He smiled showing his white teeth. To inspire still more confidence in me, she added:

Last night I drank the contents of six bottles. Tonight I have ordered only four, and tomorrow, only two and after that none!—

She seemed sincere.

A few moments after this we arrived at her house.

It was about five o'clock in the morning because I had the surprise upon awakening to find myself alone. I called several times without receiving any reply, then I got up and took a look all through the apartment.

There she was waiting on the balcony.

What are you doing there? I demanded of her.

She trembled, a bit ill at ease.

I was so warm that I came out here to get a breath of air!

This was a perfectly feasible explanation.

Being used to her whims, I said nothing more.

I returned peacefully to my bedroom, when suddenly I heard a door opening. It seemed to be in the corridor. I was troubled for a moment! I bounced out of bed, resolved to solve the mystery, and at the same time, I heard the happy voice of a man:

Here are your two bottles, my little lady!—You may realize my feelings after this as I knew full well that this messenger was not the one who urged the sale of the drug!

Yamina replied in a low voice. Then she closed the door quietly, and there I stood.

This was a very stormy meeting. She invented lie after lie in order to deceive me, contradicting herself many times.

At last, sobbingly she admitted that she had emptied four bottles without being able to forget, she had waited almost an hour on the balcony in order to attract some man who would go and buy a new supply for her.

And this ended it all as far as I was concerned.

Fifteen years ago I left Provence, and love deserted me.—Yamina and I will never meet again unless the God of the Musulman and the God of the Jews meet in a common Hell.

TROMKÈ AND THE LITTLE OLD WOMAN

By LOUIS DELATTRE

So you wish to hear, once again, the story of the dog Tromkè, who went to see the little old woman at the Workhouse? And nothing must be left out? And I must say "Wow! Wow!" just as the dog did?

Well, the little old woman lived at the very top of a staircase that made its way in a most leisurely manner from the basement of the house to her attic, turning, twisting and stretching itself in a way that must have seemed very quaint and amusing to lodgers blessed with good legs; but our little old woman only ventured downstairs as a last resort. She seldom left her room, and her dog was her only companion.

His name was Tromkè. He had a perfectly round body, over which the skin was stretched as tightly as that of a drum, for that is the meaning of his name in the Brussels dialect. His scanty coat was snuff-coloured, and the tip of his nose was fast becoming grey, but his eyes were, as they had always been, a pair of pure and liquid topazes. As he was losing his teeth, his food consisted of liver chopped up with bread and a pinch of salt.

Tromkè was spoilt and inclined to be disobedient. He did not mind vexing his mistress, who was often obliged to get out of bed in the middle of the night to let him in. And yet, you must know, it was on those occasions that he was given the choicest morsels, and it is my belief that the old woman loved him like a son, that is to say, more dearly than ever when he had behaved badly and wounded her tender heart. You will find out yourself, some day, that the hearts of women, even of little old women, are not always happiest when they are at peace.

After dinner, when Tromkè, with the gait of a well-fed and

over-corpulent citizen, took himself off to roam the streets, she would lean out of the window and follow him with her eyes until he disappeared round the next corner.

It was a beautiful window. You must not be sorry that it had no curtains, for the view of the sky was much clearer and finer without them.

Outside, in an earthenware pot on the window-ledge, a plant of heliotrope was slowly fading, with each of its little branches carefully tied to the main stem. In the shade stood a bottle of oil wrapped in greasy paper, and a little fat stone jar containing the fine, moist shreds of a roll of civet-flavoured tobacco.

From the window, far into the distance, stretched a rolling sea of blue and red roofs. Here and there could be seen the mossy spouts of the gutters; the tiny bridges between the earthenware chimney-pots, leaning at crazy angles on every side; the clothes-lines hung with all manner of garments, ragged and blown to and fro in the wind; in the dark well of some courtyard, a creeper struggling to climb a broken trellis, and the red stain of worn and scoured bricks. Near at hand, the vent-pipe of a workshop spat out its steam with a sound as of sharp and rhythmic breathing.

As well as being a source of great enjoyment to the little old woman, the window also provided a useful observation post. On Sunday mornings, some neighbour or other never failed to ask leave to watch, from this vantage-ground, the return of his carrier-pigeons from their trial flights.

The man would move softly in his stocking-feet, and hold his breath when one of his birds alighted on the roof, shaking its feathers, and dived swiftly into the dovecot, making the little swing-door rock as it passed through. Then he would rush away, upsetting everything on his passage, without closing the door, without thanking his hostess for her kindness. For people, you see, once they have got what they wanted, lose their gentleness and think nothing of jostling you; so, if you have done anyone a service, stand aside and let him escape at once. But, of course, you know this already, you have heard the story so often before!

Neither need I give you a detailed description of the attic of which I am speaking. Fussy housewives, who scrub their kitchens from morning till night, might perhaps have thought it dirty and untidy. Ah, do not believe them! Look instead at the smiling little old woman, sitting in her low chair, and at all the things around her, worn and polished by homely hands; their dim colours will soothe and caress you like a picture by Chardin, the painter who has shown us the souls of humble things, which others believe to be lifeless.

There is the table, roughened by much scouring, the tougher fibre of the wood standing out in polished oval relief. On this table stand a bowl of pottery decorated with blue flowers, the milky coffee which it contains making a pool of harmonious brown; a slice of bread, the colour of the sun on a heap of straw and edged with sunburnt crust; a lump of golden butter on the tip of a black-handled knife . . . and Granny stretches out a shaking hand; the faintly speckled skin is drawn tightly over the hollows on its wasted back, transparent and glossy like the film inside an egg, revealing a net-work of delicate blue veins.

Does it not seem as though all these things loved the little old woman and wished to weave her a frame of smiles, like the ribbons of the Scotch bonnet, embroidered with thistles, that used to flutter round your rosy cheeks when you were quite a tiny girl, dear little one?

Tromkè, having finished his walk, would scratch impatiently on the door. On being let in, he would take a few turns round the room to make sure that everything was in its right place, and then Granny would say:—

"Tromkè, I am going to make the coffee for tea."

And she set to work. It was Jacqmotte coffee, and had cost a fair price. Its flavour was dear to the heart of the little old woman. She ground it slowly and finely in a little mill with a funnel of dented brass, held tightly between her knees—the handle, I remember, was an empty cotton-reel. Then she shook the box carefully so that not a grain of the precious stuff should adhere to the wood. If the powder stuck, she would say: "There will be a change in the weather," for it is

a sure sign of rain. Then, while brewing the coffee (I will tell you, some other time, the tale of the brown coffee-pot), the good woman murmured:

"So there you are, Tromkè! Naughty boy! He spends the whole day in the street, but he has never a bit of news for his mistress! And yet I am sure that, on the pavement, he carries all before him. For the very first dog he meets, Tromkè puts on his most charming manners. But for the poor old Granny who makes the coffee, never a single word! Ah, the wretch!"

Now do not mistake me. Words cannot tell everything; are not caresses and kisses hidden among those I speak to you? The old woman's talk ill disguised her affection for the pot-bellied rover, the neglectful Tromkè, her old heart could not hide the fact that we love those who disdain us. . . .

When daylight began to fail, the little old woman supped off two roast potatoes and went to bed, while the dog, curled up in his basket, spent some time grunting, snuffing, and turning round before going to sleep. Sometimes his growls and mutterings would wake his mistress.

"He is dreaming," she would say, "of the stationer's dog, who has a blue cloth coat and a collar with bells."

It was true. Tromkè often gave great sighs in his sleep, and sometimes little laughs. Dogs in their dreams are happy and contented, or suffering and complaining, exactly like men. Like men, too, there are some who, in the watches of the night, complain without suffering at all.

In this way, for our two friends, the days came and went in happy harmony. You have seen that Tromkè was as dear as a son to the little old woman, and you have heard that she told him all her inmost thoughts. . . . If only he had been a little more talkative, their happiness would have been complete.

For these simple souls lived on nothing at all. Their sweet friendship was enough for them; they were perfectly contented. There are souls which remain unwithered by the fevers, unharassed by the tumult of the world; a breeze as light as a murmur among birch-trees is enough to refresh them. Thus, children care not for wine: they drink

the clear waters of the meadow brook, and they are gay!

But, alas! the happiness of the two companions was not to last.

One day, the old woman's married daughter arrived with the news that, after many applications, much coming and going, and with the help of numerous documents signed by stout gentlemen with gold watch-chains, she had at last obtained permission for her mother to enter the Workhouse.

This place is a refuge for women who are old and poor, or whose children no longer care for them. They go there to die when their eyes are worn out and their long, yellow hands are numb and useless. They may bring nothing of their own with them; they are seized and stowed away, and each one lives by rule in her own appointed place. It is all very quickly and easily arranged.

The little old woman bade farewell to Tromkè. Ah, the ungrateful son, the lazy lover! He was hardly back in time to receive those soft caresses, those tender kisses! She knelt down, leaning on her hands, but he would not let her touch him; in her eagerness to catch him, she dragged herself painfully across the floor, but in vain, for her tears were blinding her. He only answered "Wow! Wow!" and buried himself in his basket. The selfish fellow's only thought, at this sad moment, was to appear strong and manly, to make people believe that he did not mind parting from the old woman. Nevertheless, when he heard the door close upon her, he could not help barking. But his mistress did not hear him, and that was Tromkè's punishment, for you know, of course, that God punishes dogs as well as men.

The next day the attic was cleared out. The old woman's daughter took the dog to her own house, because he was very old and could not fail to die before long. In his new abode he was given a meal once a day, and, after that, nobody heeded whither he went. There were no more friendly scoldings, there was no one to ask him why he sulked. If he growled, he was whipped. Now at last his thoughts turned to the kind mistress he had lost!

She, poor soul, was established in that great barrack of a

place in a certain steep street lined by stone walls covered with many-coloured advertisements. Here and there a tree poked its head over these walls, as though to bid good-morrow to the passers-by.

The high door of the great building is shut; the curtains are evenly drawn across the windows. Their symmetrical neatness is reproduced inside the Workhouse, where everything is perfectly tidy and in its right place. The pendulum divides the day into neat little slices, and life keeps its straight course, looking neither to right nor to left.

This change in her mode of living was very painful to the old woman, and for some days she felt bewildered and homesick. She had to fumble among the folds of her pensioner's uniform in search of the pocket which held her handkerchief and snuff-box, and the string of her black cap scratched her chin. She had nothing to do; her coffee was hot when brought to her, and she was free to twiddle her thumbs, for the other old women, her companions, jealously guarded the little tasks that fell to their lot, and hugged themselves selfishly in their corners, chuckling:

"Look at that lazy creature! She never does a stroke of work!"

So saying, one would resume with renewed energy the polishing of a shoe, another would frown with earnestness over the stocking she was darning. In short, our poor little Granny was eating her heart out for want of something to do, when one of the inmates died; and the dead woman's task of peeling the vegetables devolved upon her.

Between ourselves, this was the pleasantest job of all. Every morning the greenstuff arrived from market still wet with dew. Sometimes—I tell you this in strict confidence—she would slyly nibble the end of a rosy turnip, or, better still, the tender heart of a lettuce. Above all, she could say with much satisfaction:

"How busy I am, to be sure! No, I shall never be able to get through my work today. . . . Don't talk to me, for pity's sake!"

Plop! fell the pieces into the basin of water at her side.

She rolled up her sleeves with a determined air, and straightened the glasses on her nose. There was not a minute to lose!

The only distraction she allowed herself was to lift a corner of the curtain and take a sly peep at the street.

"The neighbour opposite is a good housewife," she would say to herself, "just as I used to be. Her doorstep and the pavement in front of it are as clean as a new pin. . . ."

Meanwhile, Tromkè was looking everywhere for his mistress. The liberty he was now allowed amounted almost to complete desertion, and he felt lonely and neglected. In his heart he acknowledged how wrong he had been to sulk with his kind mistress, to grunt and growl instead of responding to her caresses.

Where could he find her? He hunted untiringly throughout the little streets nearby. . . . He went into the greengrocer's shop where she had dealt for years. She was not there. Neither was she in the White Horse Tavern, where she had sometimes dropped in to drink half a glass. The woman in the dairy chased him out of her shop, where he had been pursuing his investigations. At the cross-roads the despairing Tromkè stopped running and yelped long and plaintively, turning his head from side to side.

At last, one day, the little old woman, who was peeling vegetables in the Workhouse, recognized his voice. Trembling with emotion she opened the window and leaned out.

"Tromkè, Tromkè, my darling!" she cried.

The dog lifted his head, and, catching sight of his dear mistress, began to tear round in circles, unable to utter a sound. He spread out his front paws in the middle of the road, beating his tail on the ground and leaping into the air. At length he began to bark, while the little old woman clapped her hands, shaking her head, and repeating: "Tromkè, Tromkè, my darling!"

For a long time they stayed like this. She asked him for all his news, and then told him what she herself had been doing. He listened, grunting with joy, and giving sudden

little leaps and skips. Then they gazed long at each other, tenderly and in silence.

By and by Tromkè came and leant against the wall, and the old woman bent down to stroke him. But, she was on the ground floor, and though Tromkè—usually so heavy and clumsy—stood on his hind legs and stretched out his neck, she was not able to touch him. She tried a second time, for he was almost within reach, but without success, and Tromkè dropped on to his four paws again. Then Granny had a good idea. Taking her stick, she tied her snuff-stained handkerchief to the tip and, passing it through the window, was able to touch Tromkè. She stroked him long and lovingly with the end of the red rag. After a time she told him to get up, to be sensible, and to go home like a good boy. He trotted away, and she shut down the window.

Returning to her chair, the little old woman rubbed the mist from her glasses and set to work again on her vegetables without shedding a single tear. It is true that she could not keep her thin lips from trembling during the rest of the day on which Tromkè had come to see her, such a long way and all by himself!

Every day after this Tromkè set out for the Workhouse. At the corner of the street, near the wall with the red and yellow advertisements, he would call out:

"Wow! Wow!" And again, as he drew near: "Wow! Wow!" This meant, you know, "I am coming!" At last, below the window, he sat down and repeated:

"Wow-wow-wow! I am here, dear mistress! Dear mistress, Tromkè has come to bid you good-day; open the window!"

The little old woman opened the window. She held her kitchen-knife in one hand, and, in the other, a potato from which hung a cork-screw of curly peel.

"Oh, oh!" she said. "So here comes Tromkè!" And then they began to talk.

Tromkè came back every day, every single day.

"Tromkè, do you remember the round basket in which you slept, under my bed?"

"Wow!"

"And the ha'porth of liver I used to buy for your Sunday dinner?"

"Wow!"

"And the evening you didn't come home, and I went to look for you all over the place, late at night? You were hiding near the 'Three Partridges,' waiting for the stationer, who was having a drink, with his pretty little curly-haired dog beside him. . . . Ah, you rascal! I had to pick you up in my arms. You bit me and wanted to run back again!"

"Wow! Wow!"

The other inmates of the Workhouse soon learnt of these daily visits. They all wanted to see Tromkè, and each kept a piece of sugar for him. When he arrived the old withered faces at the window were wreathed in smiles. He soon got to know one from the other, and yapped in answer to the caresses they bestowed on him, turn about, by means of the handkerchief tied to the end of the stick. . . .

He was now in a fair way to being thoroughly spoilt. Without ceasing to love his friends of the Workhouse, Tromkè, who in this was as unreasonable as any man, soon lost his first keen appreciation of caresses for which he had now no need to ask. He began to forget the sad days when he had had to beg for them, and, if he was kept waiting for a moment at the window, he was ready to sulk as of old.

One day he did not pick up a piece of sugar that had been thrown out to him. Another day he took himself off in the very middle of a conversation, leaving the astonished old women to call and beckon in vain. Sometimes three or four days would elapse between his visits, without any apology on his part, without the slightest token of regret!

All these things pained the little old woman, and one day she said, tremulously:

"Tromkè doesn't love his mistress any more, though she is getting very old and weak, and has not long to live. Tromkè only comes to see her grudgingly. Let him think that soon she will have gone away for ever!"

But the dog was not really cruel, only thoughtless, like a

spoilt child. His mistress's words touched him so much that he promised never again to be late or to miss a single visit. Accordingly, next day, he set out earlier than usual for the Workhouse.

"I will prove to my mistress that I love her as much as ever," said he, wagging his tail and hastening along, on fire with zeal and good resolutions.

Ah! why did he catch sight of the stationer's curly-haired dog on the doorstep of the "Three Partridges"? She was waiting in the alley for her master, who was having a glass of beer. Tromkè, to do him justice, took no notice of her at first. It was she who called out: "Hou! Hou!" At this he turned his head, but only to bow to her.

"Hou! Hou!" repeated the pretty little dog. "Well, Tromkè, is this your way of proving the affection of which you talk so much? Yes, yes! You wanted to make poor Curly believe you, but you are but a fickle gallant. Heaven knows to what new friends you are hurrying at this very moment!"

Now, I ask you, how could he explain to a little dog in a cloth coat that he was hastening to the Workhouse, to see his Granny who was old and ill?

——"With a little pat of butter, and cakes, and a bottle of wine?"——

No, no, that belongs to another story. . . . Look, here comes the stationer, wiping his mouth and clearing his throat. He puffs at his pipe and whistles to his dog.

Tromkè followed Curly, trying to whisper a word or two in her ear before going off. The little coquette allowed him to draw near, and the moment he touched her, jumped to the other side of her master. The latter walked on unheeding; Tromkè could not make up his mind to leave the teasing little thing without a word—and meanwhile the time was passing.

"At this moment," thought Tromkè, "I ought to be in front of the window; little Granny is there already. . . . Now," he thought, a minute afterwards, "it is too late. I have broken my word, the very day after all my promises! What is she thinking of me?"

But still the stationer's dog would not listen.

"Hou! Hou!" said she. "How sheepish you look today, Mr. Tromkè! To see your drooping ears, one would think you were following us most reluctantly. . . . What, villain, do you want to escape up a side-street? Go away, then! don't let me detain you! I shall not dream of encouraging a boor who treats me with such scant politeness!"

Despite her reproaches, Tromkè still followed Curly. The hour of meeting at the Workhouse had gone by, and now she wouldn't even look at him!

On their return home he stopped and sat down on the kerbstone ready to jump up at the least sign from his cruel charmer. But she made none.

"Coquette!" he barked at last, in his anger.

He was in despair. Had he been a man, that evening he would have drowned his cares in alcohol. He had broken his promise, and had gained nothing thereby. Dogs are tender-hearted, and Tromkè wept.

It was already nearly dark, but he resolved to call at the Workhouse. Sitting down in front of the window he barked "Wow! Wow!" quite gently, as if in fun; yes, just as though he were laughing at an innocent little joke he had played on his kind little Granny.

Ha! Ha! A little joke. Wow! Wow! But he took care not to let it last any longer.

She did not come. Through the window, all that was to be seen was a faint light that grew brighter as the shadows darkened. Tromkè did not lose patience; he began to call again, softly, and waited submissively for his kind mistress to open the window.

Sometimes he would shut his eyes, or turn them aside for a few seconds; after which he would glance sharply at the light, to make sure that it had not moved in the meantime. In this way poor Tromkè gave himself from time to time a fleeting moment of hope.

All night long, the light remained stationary and pitiless, and the curtains drawn. At daybreak Tromkè went away.

He came back in the afternoon, and again the following

day, and the day after that, and so on. Sitting on his haunches he howled dismally at the closed window. One day an old woman appeared. When the curtain moved Tromkè spread out his front paws ready to spring forward. Alas! it was not the voice of his mistress, but of a stranger, which said, from inside the room:

"Oh, do come and see! It is Caroline's dog barking in the street! . . . Tromkè, don't you know that your mistress is dead? She waited a long time for you the other day. You never came, and she died. . . ."

Tromkè never got over the shock of this news, and, before very long, he went to join his old mistress. And as he was truly sorry for his sin, I am sure that she has forgiven him.

You know that, in Heaven, the good dogs sleep upon their masters' thrones, like the greyhounds who keep watch at the feet of the stone figures on old tombs. And it is St. Roch who has the finest dog of all.

And now *you* must finish the story, my little maid.

——"Well, Tromkè went to Heaven with his little old Granny, and there he plays all day long with St. Roch's dog, and they have cakes and sweetmeats for dinner instead of dog-biscuits and mashed potatoes."

Yes, yes, that is true, quite true! Ah, little one, never, never forget that we must smile upon those who love us!

THE CONVICT FROM THE ISLE DU ROI

By PIERRE DOMINIQUE

On the Riff coast, near the estuary of the Moulouya, lie the three islands of the Cianffarinas. About thirty years ago there was still a Spanish convict prison there. The hundred and fifty convicts lived with their warders on the isle d'Isabelle-Deux, which was almost entirely covered by the large square-shaped white building whose walls were pierced with small round windows about the size of cat-holes. The isle du Congrès was deserted, but on the isle du Roi two men had always lived. One of these two was a man named Inglésias, who had killed in his own country of Seville a muleteer, by the name of Sereno, because the latter had stolen his sweetheart. The muleteer met his death in a rather curious fashion. Unarmed, and taken by surprise at Iglésias' attack, he had lowered his head and charged his adversary in a bull-like rush, whereupon the assassin's knife had struck him from above the base of the skull between two vertebræ, cutting through to the marrow.

On the isle du Roi were three little bits of garden where green vegetables grew luxuriantly and tomatoes ripened large and red in the sun, thanks to the thin soil, which had been carried basket by basket to these three rocky hollows, and the water of which the men deprived themselves for the sake of their garden. Here Iglésias and his companion lived in a wooden hut with a few fowls, sleeping on straw mattresses, tending their garden and gathering winkles and sea-urchins to the tune of Andalusian airs. Every week twenty pounds of bread was brought to them. The boatman charged with this duty had orders never to land, and simply to throw over the bread as though to dogs. He carried out his orders to the letter, and never addressed a word to them.

even when the bread rolled into the water. Thus the days passed on the isle du Roi, and if two convicts wearied of the monotony, that was of no moment. Well! who would not regret the narrow streets and dark smoking inns of Seville, the dance-halls, the sweet heavy air of the perfumed night and the scent of the long brown cigars as the flower-laden trees shivered in the evening breeze? And to this double perfume was added that of a girl clasped in strong arms, to which she surrendered herself. Oh, bah! Man is a born gambler, and when he loses, the best thing he can do is not to whine.

One day when the boatman arrived with the bread he noticed that only one of the convicts appeared when he blew his whistle. Scowling, he demanded fiercely,

"Where is the other dog?"

Iglésias turned and pointed with his thumb a little higher up along the rocks to where a body lay, clad only in a pair of trousers, the chest exposed.

"He fell down there this morning, where he lay breathing with difficulty for a little time. Now he is dead. God save his soul!"

He made two rapid and almost imperceptible signs of the cross. The boatman and the convict gazed at one another. . . . The sea murmured between them. Iglésias' eyes expressed both good will and a vague regret.

"You ought to take him away and bury him," said he at last. "He will rot there, you know."

And he gathered together the loaves of bread and piled them up on the sand. The boatman, a lad from Algeciras, who had only recently taken over his duties, reflected. The orders were clear—throw over the bread and do not land—but the case was new. Iglésias was reputed to be a model convict, the isle Isabelle-Deux was in view . . . and moreover, he prided himself on being a smart fellow. For a moment his swarthy brow was knit in the weighty consideration becoming a sailor of the King of Spain, then he leapt ashore.

"Come on," he cried.

A minute later, as he leaned over the corpse, he was knocked senseless by a blow on the temple and fell across the dead body. The warders on the island of Isabelle-Deux, swearing under their peaked Moorish helmets, fired their guns, in vain, their balls whipping the water, as Iglésias the convict, now master of one of His Majesty's boats, sped away towards Morocco.

And in Morocco? Adventures? Tortures? Certain slavery. From time to time a convict from the Cianffarinas or elsewhere escaped there. As a rule they were peasants who had been imprisoned for robbery, murder or arson—clever and industrious workers. One would teach the natives the culture of potatoes and another would show them how to grow egg plants; in fact, the first steps that the Riffs made on the wonderful road to civilization, whether in the drilling of troops or the manœuvring of cannon or the draining of the marshes, were taught them by Spanish convicts.

Iglésias, who had ascended the river valley from the south and then followed the caravan route, arrived at Taza and, some months later, at Fez. God alone knows how long he took and the difficulties he encountered on his journey. The first day when he begged alms in the street there and Mohamed-ben-Sliman, the merchant, took him into his house, he was so sunburnt, so dusty and dirty and altogether such a miserable object in his ragged native garments with his bleeding feet and body covered with sores, round which the flies buzzed, that he aroused only pity.

He took the name of Issa, and for many months was happy tending the merchant's garden. He was a slave, and it was as good as anything he could hope for. For several pleasant years he lived there under the shade of the orange trees. In the cool of the evening the slave would turn his gaze towards the north where, beyond the barrier of mountains, lay the sea, and beyond that again, Spain, the burnished casket which held his pearl of great price—that dark-eyed girl of Seville, for whose sake Sereno had died. Ah, if only he might see Dolores again! The prostitutes in the low quarter of the town, and even the little Jewess who gave

herself to him sometimes for the sake of a handful of dates, came nowhere near her; none had ever given or could ever give love in so royal and prodigal a fashion.

The long hot days stretched out interminably, but there was always the welcome coolness that came with the evening breeze when the Spaniard arose to water the thirsty garden. As the water flowed through the little irrigating canals among the orange trees it murmured softly over the pebbles and burbled gaily down tiny cascades. Iglésias, who during his sojourn at Fez had put on weight and become sentimental, listened to the song of the water and was filled with a gentle melancholy.

One day, from the city wall, he noticed a butcher throw a basket of offal down the cliff side; for at that time the viscera of sheep were always thrown away for the vultures or stray dogs to feed on. As the man emptied his basket, cursing Christians in general and Iglésias in particular, the ex-convict was seized with a great idea—why not make a business out of the viscera, which were thrown away as carrion here but in Spain were worth so many pesetas? Iglésias should be remembered today as the founder of what is now a flourishing industry in Fez.

At first, creeping out of his master's garden, he worked alone preparing the viscera, which he had managed to snatch from the dogs and vultures, during the heat of the day in a hollow shaded a little by the ramparts. Later on his master, realizing the possibilities of the scheme, supplied him with shelter and slaves to aid in the work. This was the beginning of the fortune of Iglésias and Mohamed-ben-Sliman and several butchers. At the end of a year Iglésias was able to buy his freedom, and, with money in his pocket, he left Fez, after kissing Mohamed on the shoulder according to the Arab custom, and settled down at Tangiers, where he became cashier to the Spanish Consul.

You ask if the Consul was mad? But why? He was not personally acquainted with his cashier, who, as far as he was concerned, was merely a certain Spaniard (what did

the name matter—it is always easy to get a name); he knew Arabic, which was the essential thing. At the end of a week the new cashier showed himself not only accurate and obliging but also honest, which is the supreme virtue in consulates in Morocco and Spain, or in any part of the world for that matter. That was how he came to stay there. And he remained as long as it pleased him.

Several years passed, and Iglésias became quite a personality in the society of Tangiers. He had almost forgotten Fez, and the years in Cianffarinas were completely blotted out, but strangely enough Spain and the remote past remained very vividly in his mind. Perhaps it was a secret hope which made Seville seem nearer than Mohamed's garden at the foot of the ramparts of Fez. With his face towards Spain he thought he could smell the old familiar odours which he never found amongst the Jews and Arabs, and that was how one evening he became aware of the fate a relentless Destiny held for him.

Iglésias had complete confidence in the power of the Church in Spain, and he therefore decided to speak of his past to Father Fernando, the Franciscan priest. That is what priests are for, especially Franciscans, and above all those from Morocco, who come across so many brigands, and even carry their crucifix like a rifle. Father Fernando loved all God's creatures, but he had a special fondness for this fellow who he felt was made to play a man's part in the world. He had only one thing to find fault with—Iglésias was too prosperous; he would have liked him to be poor, living in holy poverty.

"As the grass of the field, Iglésias, my son," said he, "that is how one should live."

"Alas," replied Iglésias, "indeed, I am less than the dust."

"If it were as you say, and you had this humility of spirit, then would not God accord you his pardon? . . ."

"As I was saying. . . ."

They were sitting on a large flat stone on the side of the track towards Larache, beyond the outskirts of Tangiers and

within sound of the restless sea. Old memories crowded upon the ex-convict, dissipating again like the foam on the waves below as they dashed themselves against the rocks, leaving only a momentary painful remembrance. Iglésias felt impelled to speak out—perhaps the good father was an instrument in the hands of a Divine purpose.

"I came from Fez, where I was a slave. . . ."

The priest inclined his head.

"Well, my son, well. . . ."

"And before that from the Cianffarinas, where I was a convict. . . ."

The priest looked at Iglésias gently and took both his hands.

"I killed a man," said the convict.

"Ah, but don't you know that the Lamb redeems all murderers through the sword thrust which he received on Calvary?"

Iglésias, his face towards the north-west, was staring savagely at the waves; he did not even seem to hear the father's words.

"She was the loveliest thing you could wish to see. Have you ever been to Seville? Yes? Just a girl who worked in a laundry, nothing more, but what a figure! A deep soft bosom and rounded golden hips—ah! And her walk, and her dancing—it went through you like fire! Oh, her eyes and her lips and the way she could kiss. . . . My God!" he cried in a gesture of despair.

For a few seconds there was silence, and then the beating of the surf on the rocks broke in upon their meditations.

"Go in peace," cried the priest, "look up at the clear beauty of the stars!"

Iglésias gave him an evil glance, then he sat down, and, burying his face in his hands, he sighed deeply and said,

"How I loved her! I gave her all I had—time, money, everything. I'd have sacrificed my life for her, and that of others too. Even my poor old mother, who sold water-melons at the market—I beggared her of all I could! And then when I had nothing left and had pawned even my watch—you

know the story, Father, Dolores, my Dolores left me to go and live . . ."

He bowed his head and shook it sadly.

"Oh, my poor friend!" murmured the priest. . . . "With another. . . ."

Iglésias broke off, sighed, crossed his hands and continued.

"My vanity died that day with my honour. I had but one idea—to find the woman and her lover. And one evening God let it come to pass, in a tavern down by the docks. At first I only saw Sereno, leaning up against the bar, as he turned round laughing.

" 'Dolores!' he cried, clapping his hands.

"He was laughing and teasing her. And I could see the handle of his knife as it stuck out of his belt. At his call she rose and came forward from the back of the room, where she had doubtless been sitting with the other girls. Without seeing her I could feel her coming, could sense her approach; and she passed by me brazenly, without a look, Father, without so much as a look! Then she reached his side, and in front of that roomful of men she kissed him on the lips. Even the barmaid stopped short, and as for the drinkers—the muleteers and the sailors—they all understood and gazed spellbound and horrified, suffering with me. Those two alone did not care—he through vanity and pride of conquest . . . she through sheer heartlessness.

"They were not aware of the evil thing that was at hand. Verily, it was the shadow of God and his judgment that hung above our heads. At that moment I fell forward against the table with my face buried in my arms, and began to weep, and immediately a hubbub broke out. The cowardly wretches who sat drinking thought I was bemoaning my misfortune; but I was weeping for the dreadful vengeance that drew silently nearer. Suddenly a man tapped me on the shoulder.

" 'Get out of here,' he ordered roughly.

"It was the inkeeper who thus revealed his contempt for me.

"I raised a haggard face and looked at him straight with my eyes full of tears. I remember so well one of them

trickling down my cheek. He stood still with his burly form towering above me, wearing a red cap on his matted hair. But he must have become aware of something in my face, for he suddenly stopped his bullying and drew back uncertainly. I remember a foolish laugh from one of the servants which the innkeeper's movement cut short. And then the sight of that treacherous girl leaning against the man who had stolen her from me. As I rose the expression on Dolores' face changed to that of fear . . . but I saw no more, with a bound I flung myself at the man, my knife in my hand. Sereno had paled, but he came of a fighting race and he lowered his head to charge me in the chest. But I leapt aside, avoiding his rush, and then I struck, struck at the back of his neck—just as a toreador kills a bull. I struck with all my force, . . . I can still see the knife burying itself in his flesh. Dolores had tried to throw herself between us and her shawl had caught on his shoulder. The blow pinned it to the dead man, and there she stood with her shoulders naked—stripped by a single stroke of shawl and lover, for Sereno had fallen like a log dragging it with him. God! How she screamed!"

"My son, my son. . . ." murmured Father Fernando.

For a moment the ex-convict remained with clenched fists and extended arms, his face contorted.

"My son," continued the priest, placing his hands tenderly on his shoulders, "God . . ."

"No, tomorrow," said Iglésias, "not tonight."

"So be it," replied the priest.

That was how Iglésias came to confess. Father Fernando was head of the Franciscans at Tangiers, and from that time Iglésias became his special protégé, and as he was already regarded by the Consul as his right-hand man, it is not surprising that by their united efforts the priest and the consul succeeded in procuring his official pardon. This was granted by the King without any special reason being assigned, "as though," said the priest, "God himself was behind it all." Iglésias became the most noteworthy person in

the colony. It was no sooner known that he was a convict than people learned that the King had pardoned him. There was no time for scandal—astonishment gave place to rejoicing at once. Besides, the whole story was so dramatic and had such a moral that it was bound to be popular.

As for Iglésias himself, he was far too eager to get back to Spain to stay and enjoy his triumph at Tangiers.

It was in vain that the padre told him he should remain in Tangiers where he had his work at the Consulate, and outside of that could devote his life to a worthy object. Iglésias looked obstinately across to Gibraltar and replied that he must obey.

"Obey what, you pig-headed fellow?"

"God, who wills that I shall return."

The priest sympathized with the emotion which moved him and, realizing its force, he silenced his own misgivings and said no more. Afterwards, he bitterly repented his action and wished that he had asked the Consul to imprison the man—simply for the sake of his eternal salvation.

The next day Iglésias embarked for Spain, so eager to be off that he was the first on board, and so hungry for the sight of his country that once on board he never looked back towards the land he was leaving. At Gibraltar the travellers were not allowed to stay overnight in the English fortress without a special permit. But Iglésias did not ask to stay. That very night he set out for Seville—for the Seville he had known and loved as a youth, and which had not changed at all. Still she stood on the banks of her river, like an old love, waiting to welcome him.

As he came out of the station he went into a tavern, simply for the sake of looking at the people, hearing their voices and sensing the old familiar smells. He had hardly pushed open the door when he realised that this was the very inn where the tragedy had taken place ten years ago. It seemed to him as though he must see those two, Sereno and Dolores, get up from one of the tables. Then to the innkeeper, a man already bent with age, he called,

"I'll stand drinks all round."

There was a shout of acclamation as the group of drinkers approached the bar, their feet shuffling to the sound of tambourines. As Iglésias sat, swallowing glass after glass, he wondered if he had not been mistaken until, suddenly, he heard a hoarse voice, the voice, it seemed to him, of Dolores. He did not move, but he was conscious of her behind him, smelt her perfume, as real, by the Virgin, as though he held her in his arms.

Still they kept on drinking, and now Iglésias was sure they were in the same inn as on that other occasion. Yes, there was the voice of Dolores again, it came to his ears so clearly amidst all the noise of singing and laughter as the innkeeper, with his benign fatherly air, went round filling up the glasses and cracking jokes here and there with his customers.

Then a small dark man, dressed like a muleteer, poked Iglésias in the chest with his finger.

"Sereno," said Iglésias to himself.

Then he thought: "Or his ghost, or his successor." His figure stiffened, but he stood motionless by the counter without answering.

The muleteer continued:

"I know who you are now—you are Iglésias from St. Vincent. . . ."

Then he laughed and added:

"The convict."

These words startled the group of men close by, and one of them, in the act of lifting the wine to his lips, put down his half-empty glass with a gesture of disdain.

It was at this moment that Iglésias quietly drew his knife. As he did so he heard a woman's heels tapping the measure of a dance. "It is she," he told himself, and glad to feel her a spectator of the fight, he attacked. The man, taken unawares and disarmed, and unable to escape, lunged forward with his head in an attempt to knock his adversary over, but Iglésias struck as do the toreadors, and the knife buried itself in his spinal column, cutting through to the marrow.

Ten years later I found myself at the Cianffarinas and was

looking round the isle du Roi under the guidance of one of the two convicts who lived there, a queer fellow who printed a little newspaper for the prisoners, and in his spare time was correspondent of the *Madrid Herald*. My companion pointed out his comrade, who was gardening in front of their hut. It was a face worn more by passion than hardship. He was standing perfectly still, one foot on his spade, with his eyes towards Morocco. The journalist smiled, emphasizing his remarks with little affirmative jerks of the head:

"That's Iglésias, sir," he said. "Iglesias of Seville, Fez, Tangiers and Seville again, and here he is back in the Cianffarinas. Yes, that's the man. . . ."

I shook my head as I looked at the sea, which was a hard metallic blue; not a ripple broke its surface, and above the sky was the same relentless color without even a tiny cloud to soften the harsh impression. The convict seemed to be imprisoned within two shining hemispheres of brilliant azure.

"This is what I think about it, sir," said the journalist. "It is Destiny, and the matter lies between Iglésias and God. God traced a path, and just as surely as water flows along a canal, Iglésias must follow that path. That is why, when he returned to Seville, he had to kill a man to come back here. Presently he will go back to Fez, unless old age keeps him a prisoner on this island. But he cannot, and he never will be able to, stray from his appointed path."

I raised my eyes. Ten paces away the man was standing, his lips slightly apart and twisted, his arms stretched in a yearning gesture towards the South.

ARE YOU ANGRY WITH ME?

By HENRI DUVERNOIS

It was six years after Charles Rygnocque had married Mademoiselle Berthe Migoin, and their daughter Yvonne was three years old, when, for the first time, Madame Rygnocque showed signs of an exaggerated sensitiveness. As they were leaving a tiresome dinner in the Avenue Malakoff, Rygnocque suggested that they should return on foot. It was an April night, mild, but bracing, with odours coming from the Bois. In open carriages, couples, in one another's arms, were passing; the men leaning with avidity over the women, who, holding on their hats, gazed at the sky.

"They have nice high ceilings in their bedrooms," joked Rygnocque.

As Berthe shrugged her shoulders, he hastened to add:

"In comparison with our own, the love making of others is so ugly. Don't you think so, dear?"

"Oh, it isn't that."

"Then why don't you answer? Are you angry?"

He moved closer to her with a perpetual desire to touch her, kiss and look at her, like a thirst and hunger that six years of passion had not succeeded in calming.

"Say something, *please.*"

She pretended to relax, but he felt that she was still stiff and hostile. She bent her head, and he could see that she was biting her lip.

"Come, are you crying now? What is it, my love? Is it serious? Answer me, I won't ask you anything else. Is it serious?"

"Oh, serious! You'll make fun of me, most likely."

"I may make fun of you, but not of your trouble."

"Then later on, when we get home."

They returned in a carriage without exchanging a word.

He was content just to squeeze her hand as hard as he could, begging pardon in advance for her grief, of which he knew nothing. When they got home he undressed her, as he did every evening. Usually she pushed him away laughingly, saying: "Hurry up, lazy thing!" He looked at her anxiously. She was not laughing. Without her clothes she was graceful, upright, lithesome and pale, with her shining black air, fine nose, her drooping mouth and soft grey eyes,—which this evening, however, were so hard and staring that she realized it herself, closing them and bursting into tears. He put her to bed, tucked her in, petted her, whispered in her ears the usual words, words of love so tender and mad that she often cried out, choking in her delight: "Keep still! One should never be allowed to love like that!"

"Now speak, my dearest. You are in trouble?"

"Disillusioned, rather."

"What a word to use! Who is to blame?"

"You."

"Tell me quickly."

"Well, this evening, when we left the dining-room, don't you remember?"

"Let me see. . . . We were separated during dinner."

"Yes. I came up to you and said: 'Hello, you!' "

"Quite. And then?"

"Then? You said: 'Go on.' "

"And then?"

"That is all."

"I don't understand."

"That is what I feared."

"Explain."

"Must? All right. I came up to you joyously, so pleased to find you again. I cried out: 'Hello, you!' Wasn't it nice of me?"

"Certainly."

"And you answered me coldly: 'Go on.' "

"There was an old lady behind you, on the arm of an old gentleman, and they were waiting for you to pass. And any way, I added: 'Hello, my pet.' "

"To repair your mistake; but the harm was done."

"The harm?"

"Oh, naturally, the story just by itself is nothing. It was the tone. You spoke to me in such a rude way that everybody noticed it. Yes, indeed. They looked shocked. And delighted. Just fancy, a couple getting along so well! I turned as red as if you had struck me."

"Oh! But you are too sensitive, my dear one."

"There you go! Reproaching me."

"I want you to be happy."

"I was."

"Ah, as for that, Berthe, you are getting off the track. What is the matter with you? You have knocked me flat."

"You might have said: 'Go on, my darling.'"

He was by her side, pretended to make a joke of the whole matter. But an inexplicable sadness, as if he were exiled, overwhelmed him. Only yesterday they were as one. This night they were two, no doubt about it, and no physical joy could fuse them together. She kept harping foolishly on the same thing:

"Monsieur Aarlot pitied me. I saw it plainly, and was so ashamed!"

He tried to keep her from speaking by kissing her. The kiss that she tried to give nicely in return was full of rancour.

Then he got angry:

"What do you want me to do? I was a hundred million times wrong to say 'Go on,' but I said it without thinking, stupidly, but I said it. I beg your pardon on my knees. In the future I will pay great attention, and since you seem to consider the world's opinion of such importance, it will take you for what you are: a woman most beloved. Don't say anything more about it."

"That is my opinion, too. Good night."

He was stupefied. She was going to sleep with this idiotic discussion unsettled.

"My love," he implored.

"Leave me alone, will you! I have already said good night."

At dawn he fell asleep, overcome. An hour later he awoke to find his wife crying softly.

"Again! My poor dear."

"Don't pay any attention to me."

"Just for two unhappy words."

"Less unhappy than I am!"

"Unhappy?"

"Oh. I am humiliated!"

"Who humiliates you?"

"Everybody. There is something involuntary in your attitude, I must admit, that prejudices people against me. When I speak, you smile. Then they pity me, and take me for an idiot. If any one compliments me on a new dress, you always say: 'Don't you think so?' as loud as possible. Don't you realize what your 'Don't you think so' means? This: 'I took poor Berthe, ladies and gentlemen, without a penny, just after her father had failed. Think what a fairy story it seems to her! A girl obliged to make her own clothes, and to whom a new pair of boots constituted a problem. I have made a princess of her. She wanted to travel. I settled up my business. I had two hundred workmen under me; now I have a woman over me, a "patronne." ' "

"Was there as much as all that in my 'Don't you think so?" said by a poor chap in love with his wife, proud of her beauty and elegance?"

"Yes. . . . What a tragedy!"

"That's enough, my girl."

"In the future I'll be silent."

"Are you dreaming? Are you crazy? Come, it isn't possible. I am pinching myself, I'm asking myself if this is really you, my dear. You cannot be serious. Is it a test? Then I am going to have you shut up at once, a cell and a shower-bath, dear Madam!"

"Even if I were mistaken. . . ."

"Come out and go shopping. I'll buy you a nice present because you have been misbehaving, and we'll lunch in a restaurant, because you like that. Aren't you pleased?"

She stared straight in front of her and, without answering his question, said:

"You are angry with me. Why? I do not know yet, and perhaps I'll never know. You are angry with me, that is it!"

She tried to make her voice sound natural; but when she spoke it had a sullen inflexion, and her eyes were sombre when she looked at him. He was an attractive man, but small and not very strong. Among other things she alluded to men of small stature who were tyrants. Hardly had she said that when she threw herself in his arms and kissed him. "Silly boy, can't you take a joke?" But just the same she had opened a new wound with her pretended tactlessness. The original scene was no longer mentioned, the "Go on" that had set the catastrophe in motion. That remained in the darkest corner of her memory, like her father's failure, like those secret papers disclosing the family skeleton that are placed at the bottom of a carefully locked drawer. She and her husband went out a great deal more. In the company of their friends he found her more engaging than ever, more affectionate, too, as if she were playing a rôle. Afterwards it might as well have been a corpse that he held in his arms. He was jealous and stooped to spying on her, without any result. He was interested only in her, and she in him. There are couples like that who go through life always looking at each other, whether on account of love, or hatred. Charles had lived only for his passion. During the six years of his wonderful happiness he had thought: "We are living in this world: therefore it cannot last." What was the cause of the trouble? Weariness, no doubt. They would become calm again, normal like every one else, with their child to bring up.

Rygnocque was a clever man who believed in perfection. He wanted to make a perfect work of art out of his wife, who was already so endowed by nature. He taught her music and painting as if they were courses in gastronomy, showing her how to enjoy small doses, to appreciate a page

rather than an entire book. He had awakened her senses, one by one, patiently and with relish. He considered that sensuality alone was insufficient for long happiness, and that to physical, one should add all the other joys. He never thought of himself, having renounced all personal ambition in order to remain a lover. He observed, although he exaggerated it, Berthe's progress, which, to tell the truth, was not too rapid; he judged it with the prejudice of an artist too pleased with his own work. And he was ready to credit her with intellectual perfection, when in a stupid scene, she overturned the whole edifice. He would have to begin again. Well, he would begin again—in secret he consulted a doctor: "I find my wife a little nervous, a little tired, easily irritated." The doctor advised a trip. Charles chose a delightful spot in Provence. But something sinister seemed to accompany them. It was still necessary to fight against it, to wait. Solitude was no help. They returned to Paris. Their daughter Yvonne was growing up. She was a serious child, not very pretty, with at times so sad an expression that her father was worried. He discovered the reason for this only when she was ten years old. One afternoon, coming home unexpectedly, he heard a voice the intonation of which made him shiver. Berthe was speaking to her daughter. She said to her:

"He is angry with me, you see, my sweet, he is angry with me. If I only knew why. But he tells me nothing. This noon he let me eat decayed fish. I wanted to see. I helped myself. He protested only when the maid wanted to serve you with the sole. Just think, if I had eaten it! My poor darling! You would have had no more mother! Your poor mother would have died!"

The little girl cried out, terrified:

"Oh! No! Maman! Maman! I beg of you!"

Charles, very pale, appeared.

"You must not," he stuttered. "You must not!

"Yes," she conceded, "you are right. I was joking, but this little fool takes everything literally."

That same evening she proposed to send Yvonne to boarding school. He consented and added:

"You must get control of yourself. I will aid you. For some time I shall have only one child, you."

They did not take their daughter back until seven years later. Rygnocque went to get her in the Norman school where she had passed her childhood.

"Your mother is not feeling very well," he explained in the train that brought them back. "She ate some kind of cake, and imagines . . . Oh, it is hard to tell you this, my little girl, but she imagines that I wish her harm. She has it on the brain. Like an obsession. Don't be too much surprised. At meals she asks me to eat a bite out of what she has on her plate. Or else she takes her dessert out of the room and throws it to the dog . . . to see . . . if it is not poisoned. It is horrible. You must not be angry with her. She cannot help it. I am sure that I will end by curing her. It would be too stupid, otherwise, too unjust. But the task is not easy. Thinking that it was my presence that annoyed her, I went away. I stayed away three days. When I returned, I found her more excited than ever, and she accused me of influencing her from a distance. Happily she adores you. I know that she has spoken very badly of me to you. . . . Yes, yes. . . . No matter. But she is not afraid of you. She has never doubted you for a minute? Never?"

"Never, father."

"I have dedicated my whole life to her; but she must not take advantage of you. In that case I will have to take means. . . ."

He stopped, choking with emotion.

"I will aid you, you'll see," said Yvonne." I will take you for a model. I will take care of her, I swear it, poor Papa."

At the station Madame Rygnocque was waiting for them. Her beautiful face looked frozen, and had grown thin, and her eyes were dull. She used no powder. She smiled when she saw her daughter.

"How imprudent." exclaimed Charles. "Why did you come out?"

"I am feeling much better."

And in fact, during dinner she regained her former good spirits. Yvonne chatted, proud of her new dress, which was quite "grown up." There were roses on the table. The chandelier was fully lighted.

"We'll give a ball for your début," proposed Rygnocque.

"As soon as you learn to dance," agreed Berthe.

"A ball and a supper at little tables," repeated the father. "Do you know that you are very pretty, Yvonne? You have taken after your mother, and you were quite right."

Berthe smiled at the compliment, leaned toward her husband, and taking his hand, kissed it humbly. Charles exulted. A glimmer of light in the darkness, at last. Only the day before he had been so discouraged. Berthe was his again, his sweetheart of old, with her caressing eyes, her tender body, her words, palpitating with feverish gratitude.

"Ten o'clock! While we are waiting for the famous ball, I do not want you to sit up, you understand," said she to her daughter. "You must keep up your good school habits. And your father and I are tired, too."

This was the phrase that she had always used when she had been in a hurry to be alone with him. He was going to be rewarded. He had loved her so much; he still loved her so intensely that the very idea that she was going to be his that night, as formerly, that he would again have in his arms a living, passionate being, instead of an inert enemy, burned his blood. He took flowers into the bedroom. He waited for her, his heart beating furiously.

"There you are at last!"

Madame Rygnocque fell on her knees. She panted:

"Have mercy on me! Mercy! Charles, spare me! Let me live a little longer, for Yvonne's sake. You do not detest her. I swear that she is your daughter. I quite understood your suspicion when you said this evening that she looked like me. On the grave of my parents, I swear that she is your daughter. Have mercy! I thought that you would stop for this dinner at least. Well, I recognized the taste. The taste in the soup. I thought that I was swallowing fire. Oh, I knew that it was not to be tonight! You go slowly. You are taking

your time. It amuses you to see me grow thin. When my entire body will be devoured, I will go to bed, and you will put on mourning. But first I want to know why you are angry with me? I have always been faithful. You know it as well as I, since you hypnotize me and know whatever goes on in my head. Wait! Until Yvonne is eighteen, say. On her wedding evening you can kill me. You will command the electric powers all at once, I hope, because I have suffered enough. I shall not leave a single word to accuse you. I will show you my will; it begins: 'My dear husband. Yvonne is yours. You can prove it by blood tests. . . .'"

"Not so loud, I beg of you! If you are better tomorrow, you will see that you were mistaken, like yesterday, like last week."

"I am fading slowly."

"Get up."

Trembling with pity, he took her in his arms:

"You are going to try to sleep, my poor little woman. Sleep is good for you. Have no fear. I am your husband, your brother, your friend,—your friend, you understand, who is going to cure you."

Yvonne was eighteen years old. She had the serious gravity of a child who carries too heavy a secret. This secret was well kept. For the rest of the world Madame Rygnocque was charming, cultivated, witty, rather a dreamer, which was explained by the poetry she wrote. Strange poems, a mixture of imprecations and prayers. She read extracts sometimes to her friends, who were astonished. "Rygnocque looks as if he were on the rack. Can he be jealous of his wife's talent?" Tragic at home, Berthe was very gay in front of others, very gay, if rather resigned. She dissimulated also before her daughter. Once, as Charles was going out, she murmured, pointing to the door: "We'll see who gets there first."

"What do you mean, Maman?" asked Yvonne.

"I meant to say," stammered the other, "That he has probably gone to the Aarlots, so I thought that it would be a good idea to go there myself."

"The Aarlots are at Cannes."

"Do you think so?"

"You told me so yourself, a while ago."

"I don't remember."

The girl took a decision. She profited by this experience. She said to her father:

"We must persuade Maman to take care of herself, to go away for a while, to take a rest cure. I will undertake to convince her of the necessity. Will you let me manage it? And you, for your part, must see a specialist."

She was always on guard.

"Do you know what became of a penknife I had?" asked Madame Rygnocque. Yvonne had thrown it away. "No, but you do not need a knife in your drawer." The mother acquiesced, with sly docility.

"And besides, you see, Maman, you are in a very nervous condition, and here you are not well taken care of."

She answered: "Yes, perhaps. No doubt." She became very tractable, decided to defend herself all alone, to proceed cautiously. An electric shock at the telephone enlightened her. Her husband was exercising his power on the telephone. He had discovered this means. So she would answer no more calls; she pretended that it gave her the headache: "Charles, will you please answer? The telephone is ringing." And she herself proposed a cure, not far from Paris. They would come and see her often, and bring her books and sweets. The house was chosen and the director notified. And they went there one fine, sunny afternoon. "You see, Father, how reasonable she is." "Yes, yes." They had often taken this trip together, a couple in love. They had stopped under that tree to exchange kisses. The carriage stopped before the door, and they were going to leave her there. That beautiful soul; that emaciated body once so caressed was to be left in strange hands. No, they would make another effort. How could she recover from the effects of this separation? Had she not tears in her eyes?

"Oh, I say, my dear," proposed Rygnocque. "You seem very well today. We three are so comfortable together. What

if we go back home? We can drive a bit first. We can go to the doctor's another day when the weather is not so fine."

Later he said to Yvonne:

"I could not do it! I can never do it. As little of her as there is left, I want to keep. I shall always keep her."

Twenty years later the tragedy was still going on, but buried in the ashes of custom, turning into a harmless mania. Rygnocque had become an old man, Berthe an old woman; Yvonne an old maid. To all the entreaties of her father, who urged her to marry, she answered: "I love no one. I am ugly, and I am sure that I shall never be loved. So what is the use? I am quite comfortable as I am." She was never off her guard. With a look, she would force her mother to take back the accusation that she was about to make. "This cream is excellent. It tastes just the same as yours. I'll eat a little from your plate." Or else the father and daughter agreed that, in fact, the cream had an odd flavour. They collaborated together tenderly. One day Yvonne had a cold and remained in her room. Toward nine o'clock in the evening she heard the dull sound of a shot. Then silence. She was preparing to sleep again when a servant entered.

"Mademoiselle! Mademoiselle! Come quick!"

Her mother was there, as white as a sheet, but calm.

"Leave us. . . . I will explain. What a misfortune! I will explain."

And rushing after her daughter:

"He killed himself! A revolver! Don't go there, it is terrible! He got under the mattress so that it would make less noise. My poor child, I have only you, now. It is frightful! Why, my God, oh why did he do it?"

Yvonne remained alone before the body. She questioned the face. From it came the order of silence. This man had devoted his life to this woman, and he found that six years of happiness were not paid too dearly by thirty years of torture, and this abject death at the end. He had not been afraid. She would not be afraid either. She kissed the glacial forehead: "Sleep, poor Papa. I will carry on."

After the funeral formalities, the doctor's certificate, the version of suicide was admitted. "My father had become very neurasthenic." Madame Rygnocque shut herself up. Yvonne listened. She heard a sound of laughter, as if stifled by a handkerchief, and the words in a delirium of joy: "What a relief! What a relief!" At the funeral she sobbed in her crêpe veil: "We were so united!" she sighed. "Ah, if I didn't have my child!" But when she was not observed her lips seemed to be forming the syllables: "Re-lief."

After the cemetery they returned to their apartment and lunched alone together.

"Follow my example, Yvonne. I am making an effort, and you see I am to able to eat. This chicken is delicious,—as far as I could find anything good, today. You'll eat at dinner, I hope,"

"Yes, of course, don't worry about me."

At each instant she kissed her daughter. She kissed her now, and said:

"Now I am going to take a nap. Stay with me for a while."

Yvonne looked at her unlined face, her innocent little hands, white, with polished nails; hands which . . .

"You are not tired, my dear?"

"No, go and get some rest."

"Take care of her." Yvonne was there, as her father had been. She was taking up his work of sacrifice and pity.

"I shan't take a nap after all. I have been thinking. . . . I do think of things. Are you listening, Yvonne? Well! A while ago when I asked you if you would eat dinner, you answered: 'Yes, yes,' in such a queer voice. You might have added, 'Mamma dear,' but you didn't. You were cold, and rude. I blushed as if you had struck me. . . ."

She looked at her obliquely, like a frightened animal, and murmured:

"You are angry with me."

A NIGHT IN JULY

By CHARLES HENRY-HIRSCH

In spite of the torrid July heat, great wood fires had been lighted in the rooms to drive away the mustiness and mould. At the end of the day the house smelt as fresh and clean as the country. Madame Germaude, tired after helping arrange the furniture, was awaiting the daily telephone call from her husband. In a happy voice she would announce:

"You can come now with the children."

From tomorrow on and for the three most beautiful months of the year she would be in the home of her childhood surrounded by her dear ones and isolated from the acquaintances that a Paris existence with its host of petty claims imposed upon her.

Twice the conversation was interrupted by the same question from her two little sons:

"Hello, Mother, how are you?"

When it was over she felt a singular impatience at the hours that separated her from them and their father. He had spoken 'curiously' she said to herself. This 'curiously' meant embarrassment, reticence, a suspicious uncertainty in his answers.

But she was not going to worry about anything so obviously imaginary. It was her love for him that made her jealous. A night, a morning, a third of the following afternoon and she would have her three men all to herself,—her Remy, the oldest, but not always the most reasonable, and her adored babies, Marcel, a dreamer of five, and Louis, her youngest, who was fourteen months old and deserved the nickname of 'perpetual motion' bestowed upon him by his old nurse.

When the sun had set Madame Germaude ordered the doors and windows closed. She would have dinner served in

her bedroom. It was time to let the police dogs loose. She gave her orders in a jerky tone, seized by an inexplicable fear which she kept to herself, afraid to be thought timid.

When Louise, the nurse, came to announce that the doors of the kennel had been found open and that the animals had not answered to the porter's whistle she yielded to the desire of expressing this unreasonable fear of hers which she had endured since twilight and which had increased with the darknesss.

"Madame must not let herself be tormented by ideas! And whatever happens I am there, strong and fearless. And the porter is not shy nor his wife either. Moreover nothing evil has ever happened in this region; why should it begin now?"

"Thank you, Louise, you have comforted me, but not by your last statement."

"At any rate Madame has only to lock herself in to feel quite safe. If anyone ran the risk of entering that person would find that he had someone to deal with."

This Louise was strong. Martin the porter would aim his trusty gun with the calm which he had learned during the war. If necessary he would know how to strike hard with the two natural weapons at the end of his arms. If Madame Germaude ate little she no longer feared this unknown peril, from which her nerves were still on edge, far more terrifying than anything concrete.

She had forgotten the facts about the dogs when their barking reassured her.

"Each one of you gets punished for this. Come on. Turc first. Here, Turc," he ordered.

The dog howled at the blow which was intended to cut him. And Madame Germaude heard these words from the man to the dogs.

"Now for once we are even."

Full of spite they would doubtless make better guardians after this punishment. This supposition soothed the woman completely. There was a soft rubbing against the panes, but as soon as she heard it she identified it with the touch of the supple wings of a bat.

Everything was peaceful. Besides, the village, spread out around the estate, contained a number of loyal people who would prevent any marauder from harming a countrywoman such as she, faithful to the village steeple from far as well as near. On the strength of the conviction that she was popular and would be protected she nibbled some cherries. She looked at herself,—in her teeth the fruit of the same healthy red as her unpainted lips. She loved her eyes, their caressing expression, and their color like grey agate shot with streaks of gold.

She began to undress before the mirror. She smiled with the knowledge that this neck, these shoulders, this throat would grow even more beautiful. Before thirty a woman has not come into all her radiance. Maternity had not destroyed the suppleness and firmness of her figure. With singular keenness she was conscious of her youth. A sudden enthusiasm reminded her of the last days of her happy engagement. Then she slipped between the open sheets of the large bed where she had been born, where she had brought her little Marcel into the world, that dreamer of five years who would perhaps turn into an artist, and whom for that reason she already pitied. . . .

Sleep carried her off with the image of her three loved ones before her and a heart happy at the thought of receiving them on the morrow that would so soon be today. . . .

"Madame, Madame, it's I: Louise! Madame called? Martin heard Madame. Oh, Madame, answer me! Madame! So much the worse, Martin, force in the door! . . . I, I am trembling too much. Oh, go at it! . . ."

The door yielded at the fourth push of his shoulder and the upper panel broke in. Insensibly the man examined his work:

"There you are."

And immediately added: "I am not the one to go in; it wouldn't be proper."

"Don't go though! I am going to unlock it."

"Open it, but I won't go in, you can be sure of that. I refuse."

The key turned in her fingers as she pushed what remained of the door murmuring:

"You are all right, Madame?"

She turned toward the lighted hall to seize the man by his sleeve.

"Stay, please, Martin."

"Do I have to repeat it? It wouldn't be proper if I went in. Besides, there is my wife. She may be getting scared alone in the house."

"But I tell you, Martin, I may need you. Does that settle it?"

"When the nurse begins to give me orders I am deaf."

She kept a firm hold on him, pulling him along while her free hand gropingly felt for the electric light button on the wall of the room.

"My God," she screamed, as the light revealed the naked body in its tattered nightgown on the bed whose covers had been torn back from the mattress and were trailing on the floor.

Like a dweller in the dark blinded by the sudden light Martin started back into the hall, rudely freeing himself from the fingers that held him.

"Martin!"

"I told you so; it isn't proper," he growled.

"You're not going to leave me now!"

"This isn't any place for a man. Here. Let me go! I . . ."

"A lot of good it did him to go through the war," stormed Louise, hearing the flight of the former soldier.

"Madame," she called to gain courage to enter the room.

Her teeth chattered. She felt the horror of this white body with its mask of terror, the face covered with wounds and the neck spotted with red and violet bruises. A tiny stream of blood had flowed from the nostrils and from the left corner of the mouth. The head hung to one side. The dull eyes seemed still to be frightened at some immense peril.

"Poor Madame," wept Louise.

She knelt to pray,—the impulse of a simple faith in the presence of the dead. With this aid to her soul, she started

talking half aloud to keep her hands from touching anything which they felt impelled to.

"Someone came and killed her. . . . Some good-for-nothing tramp. . . . He must have taken her by force. . . . She who was so good to everybody. . . . Surely I closed the window, Madame told me to leave the inside shutters, that she would take care of those. If she had closed them she would probably be still in this world. Misfortune results from little things at times. . . . What a pity! A woman who had everything. . . ."

Sobs choked her when she thought of "Monsieur" when he heard of "this," and of the "poor kids" who were made orphans so suddenly.

Fearfully she approached the window. The black night was heavy with the perfume of leaves, flower beds and soil. This continuity in nature where a human death is of so little importance offended her feeling of immeasurable disaster.

The miserable creature must have climbed up here by means of the grooves between the stones and the façade, using the tangled ivy held solidly in place by metal brackets almost strangling its strong branches. Her eyes tried to pierce the darkness, so keen was her desire to see into it. With her elbow she grazed something rough and felt a scratch. She discovered that the pane near the fastening had been broken. Each detail etched itself on her memory. Everything must be remembered, and above all nothing omitted that would aid the law.

She leaned out again, far out, eager to discover more, puzzled that neither of the police dogs, not Trac nor Turc, had scented the marauder.

Animals trained as watchdogs, it was surprising that both of them free at night had neglected to do their duty; because during the day when in their kennels, a mere step, or the shout of a ploughman or carter, was sufficient to make them leap against their iron bars as if they would dash themselves to death. As for their barking, it was deafening.

Suddenly she discovered someone.

"Who is there?" she asked.

"I, Martin, of course."

"Madame has been murdered."

"What! But I, how could I know?"

"I'm telling you; you've got to go for the police, Martin."

"Why not wait until morning?"

"No, the police will decide what has to be done. In the meanwhile with your wife's help I will undertake to make poor Madame presentable."

"Then I've got to go to the police right away?"

"Right away, Martin."

"Perhaps you will give me permission to notify my wife first."

"You haven't been back to your house then?"

"No, there was no hurry."

"What were you doing here underneath this window?"

"I was waiting.'

"What for?"

"To see if you needed me. And then all these questions of yours. I'm not to blame for anything. You want to get me mixed up in it all. I'm beginning to have enough of it."

"This is a bad hour to choose for a quarrel, Martin. You, like me, are a servant in this house."

"I prefer your present tone. Then I am to tell my old woman, jump on my bicycle and come back with the police."

Already he was headed towards the porter's lodge at the end of the avenue and at the entrance to the park.

"Listen, Martin."

"What is it now?" he answered wearily.

"How did it happen that the dogs did not attack . . . ?"

"They can tell you that better than I. I suppose I ought to know that too. This estate is large enough for ears and noses to be too short for a dog. Ours might have been in the woods."

"Whistle to them. We'll find out."

"Do you think I'm going to whistle to them? I'm going home and after that to the police."

"All right, and if your wife would join me here, I'd feel a bit more at ease."

"My wife will get up right away. But you, you've got to let me go now or I'll still be here in the morning listening to you. . . ."

"I am no coward, still I confess I am afraid."

"He who did what has been done won't amuse himself by beginning again."

"No, without doubt. . . ."

To herself she muttered, "He is right."

A rustling in the underbrush startled Louise. The dogs were at the beginning of the avenue which Martin had to follow to reach his lodge. The woman tried to speak. But she could hardly breathe. She listened. Her temples throbbed; her heart pounded. Withdrawing a little, she strained her eyes to enlarge her field of vision. The dogs came out together from a clump of laurels. On the hunt, with their paws striking the gravel rapidly, Turc and Trac approached till they were just below the window. Their presence decreased the terror somewhat of the woman who was watching them and who had almost fainted.

In a flash of mental clearness she associated the appearance of these two animals with the détour of Martin who had abandoned the direct way. And then too why had he refused to whistle to them? The relief at feeling herself under their protection now led her into these lesser feelings of uneasiness. If she had not looked into the room immediately she would perhaps have lost that idea of an inexplicable drama with its end strangulation.

"Poor Madame," she said folding her hands.

Foreseeing that the police would look upon the body in this state, she shuddered with shame. Picking up a dressing gown from the back of an armchair she stretched the supple stuff across it, modestly pulling one end down over her knees, pulling the other till it covered her breast.

This last gesture brought her nearer to the face, formerly so happy, now motionless with terror. She was pitying her with a strange pity born of the circumstances of the end when her eyes rested on the right hand of the dead woman. Clenched near her temple, the palm was exposed. Hairs were

visible between the meeting place of nails and palm,—a fistful, torn from the aggressor during the course of the struggle. They were chestnut, almost dark.

"With that it won't take long to get him," thought Louise without thinking of anyone in particular, her mind full of bitter joy.

She would show this first of all to the police. That would help them to pick out the brute. With a proof like this punishment would be prompt. The spirit of vengeance exalted the good servant.

After stupor and despair a sort of savage madness took possession of her with the certainty that the guilty one would not be able "to go very far." In his hasty and cowardly flight he had left behind this irrefutable evidence. Chestnut, almost dark,—this tuft would betray him. He could lie but in vain. . . .

A feeling of triumph arose in Louise, then compassion filled her at the heartrending idea that "nothing would ever give life again to the body that had given it to Marcel and Louis."

Again she wept at the thought of the murdered woman, at the thought of the orphans, especially the youngest which she had nursed. At this moment they would be asleep. On going to bed they had undoubtedly been promised that tomorrow they would kiss their mother, play beneath the beautiful trees, and see their friends Turc and Trac again between the bars of the kennel.

The necessity of telling M. Germaude distracted Louise. She wept in behalf of the husband. He alone would be able to measure the enormity of a tragedy incomprehensible to the children, even though Marcel, thoughtful and sympathetic at the age of five, had at times the sadness of maturity.

Never would she have the courage to speak when Monsieur asked for Madame over the telephone. What words could she choose to break the news of the catastrophe which would not shatter the unfortunate man?

"Louise."

She started as she heard her name whispered. For a second she thought Madame had gained consciousness again. A second call brought her to the window.

"Louise, may I come up?"

"Yes indeed, come up."

It was Madame Martin. Having recognized her she felt a little more courageous, though she also thought that if the entrance was open the criminal could return. . . .

She went back to the beginning. . . . Slow to rouse herself from her first sleep,—heavier than usual after a tiring day of house cleaning,—she thought she was the victim of a nightmare. Then she found that she was mistaken; someone was really calling her. She had only closed one wing of the low window to allow a little air to find its way into her hot garret. Leaning out over the roof she had asked who was down there.

"It's Martin; did you hear anyone call?"

"No."

"I was making my rounds. It seemed to me that I heard somebody call."

"It might be somewhere else."

"I'm telling you this for Madame's sake."

"Do you think . . . ?"

"If I were you I'd go and knock at her door."

"And wake her up? Thank you; that's no pleasant job."

"As you like, Louise. Anyway there will be no reason for blaming me for neglect."

"You have succeeded in making me uneasy. I am slipping on my dress. I'll go down and knock at Madame's door. Stay there, Martin, in case I need you."

"All right, I'll wait here."

She remembered the words of the dialogue with Martin's intonations. There was a peevish tone in his usually jolly voice; a voice that ordinarily had in it a note of command to his dogs, his wife, even to the mayor and the curate; now it was hardly audible. His final "I'll wait here" had

produced a strange impression on Louise. She thought about it while she was slipping on her dress, tried to define the altered tone of voice. She began again to try to explain this unusual restraint in a man ordinarily so frank. . . .

"Holy Mother of Christ."

"To think, Madame Martin, that such misfortune has fallen upon us."

"At least you haven't touched anything."

"I just put the dressing gown over her to cover her."

"That's what the police want the most, to have things left as they were. . . . To think that she came to enjoy the summer and ended this way! What vile men there are!"

"You are right! To go as far as murder . . . for that!"

Madame Martin tossed her head with its sharp pointed face, then inspired by devotion began to make the sign of the cross and mutter:

"I am going to say a little prayer for her."

Together with Louise, though only with the lips, they went through the Lord's Prayer.

"The poor lady," sighed the porter's wife.

"Surely she didn't deserve to end this way."

"And so young still."

Madame Martin walked silently around the bed to its head.

"He strangled her; have you seen that?"

When her visual curiosity was satisfied she started to ask questions.

But instead of listening to Louise she started to chatter in order to escape the silence of death.

"I couldn't believe my husband when he came to tell me that he was going for the police. As usual I was asleep. Waking me up all of a sudden this is what he said: "Madame has been murdered." Then he got cross because I didn't understand him. "It's not such a pleasant thing to say to make me care to repeat it." Then he a drank a large quantity of wine for his trip. He forbade me to get out of bed and a minute later told me to get up and fix the lamp on his

bicycle. I felt one of his bad tempers coming on. He growled at the distance of the police. He cursed the hill he had to climb. He's very peculiar at times. I say to myself it's due to the hardships of the war in order to forgive him when he lets himself go that way. If you want to keep a man you've got to let him have his whims. You ought to know too that just before this misfortune I almost quarreled with Martin to make him go his rounds,—one round at least since Madame and you were there, for in the winter he never went a step farther than the dog kennel. And if it was after eight it was to me that he often handed over the job of letting the dogs loose."

"You argued with him about it? Then what did he say?"

"Oh, I don't know. . . . Yes I do—that he expected to show Madame that he was accustomed to waiting upon her, then I reproached him for laughing,—otherwise I wouldn't have dared but what he meant was so rascally. You are excited by my remark, Louise? I expected to get a box on the ears for that. . . ."

"Does he strike you?"

"Rarely, but it does happen sometimes. It never does to cross him. But there are times when I am too strongly tempted to resist. That gets me a smack. I can't say that I'm not prepared when I get it in the face. . . . But how can I pity myself when I see the misery that has fallen upon someone as happy up to now as Madame."

"She had everything."

"Oh the poor thing, what that bandit must have done! And then to strangle her!"

They were silent, overcome.

"Had Martin been on his rounds for a long time?"

"I had gone to bed, worn out after working with you and with our Madame. Listen, I didn't tell you this. It's coming back to me now. It was from my bed that I teased him. He had just been very nice to me during supper. I asked him to undress and try the clean sheets. It was then that he started out on his rounds. I was furious with the

nasty beast when he left me with the expression of a starved wolf. Then I closed my eyes, and fell asleep at once. . . . Don't you hear anything?"

"I think I do. . . ."

"He didn't linger crossing the hill if that's him already with the police."

"That's because he has so much vigor, that Martin of yours."

"Too much, sometimes. There are times when I should like him less so."

"And if someone should steal him from you?"

"The woman who steals my husband! Just let her come near me and I won't have any difficulty in scratching out her eyes! And I am telling you that in the presence of the dead, just as I would take an oath on my faithfulness to Martin. . . . When people marry it's to stick together."

"You're right."

"Louise, this time . . ."

"Stop a minute. I can see bicycle lights between the elms on the avenue."

There was a short whistle. Madame Martin explained that it was her husband warning the dogs Turc and Trac to approach quietly. She added:

"I ought to have gone back. Martin won't like finding me here."

"I prefer to have you with me now, Madame Martin."

"What a curious way you're looking at me. . . ."

"Not at all, Madame Martin. Only before the police get here come and let me show you something. . . . Ideas come to one sometimes without one's ever knowing how or why. . . . To begin with I don't accuse anyone. . . . I don't know a thing. . . . Come with me nearer Madame. Look at the hair that she tore from her bandit. . . ."

"It's true there is some. . . . We'd find a lock of it if we opened her hand."

"Why do you want to touch it?"

"Louise, Louise, let me. . . ."

"Madame Martin, do not touch that hand. Go as near to it as you like, but do not touch it. What are you thinking about, Madame Martin? This hair . . . if it makes you turn so pale, there must be a reason?

"None, I am neither pale nor flushed. I don't know this hair. . . ."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Louise, I won't be questioned. I was asleep in my house. . . ."

"Yes, you told me all that, Madame Martin, and before the dead, if one is honest, one does not dare to lie."

"I am honest, Louise."

"I know it. I respect you. Yet I repeat that that hair which our Madame holds made you think of someone. Why do you now cover your eyes? You are trembling like a leaf. Why don't you explain why, Madame Martin?"

Saying this Louise took her by the shoulders and shook her, asserting her nurse's strength against this poor little chatterbox who a minute ago had been talking of scratching out the eyes of every rival inclined to steal her man.

"I have nothing to say to you, Louise. Moreover you are hurting me by holding me so tight."

"I can guess what came into your head."

"Just the same, let me go."

"If not to me I'll force you to tell the others what it was," Louise threatened, tapping Madame Martin on the forehead with her finger.

"I shall speak if I have anything to say, freely of my own accord; I am as stubborn as you."

"As stubborn indeed? Certainly not more stubborn than I. And remember this, Madame Martin,—and with the permission of the 'bon Dieu' may poor Madame hear me,—that I am going to lay bare to the police the idea that came into your head just as if I had heard it from your lips. That will force you to talk. After that the police will know how to get it out of you."

The last words jerked Martin's wife out of the dumbness

and inertness in which she had taken refuge. She begged Louise by a look, a timid touch.

"Come on then. To me. . . . It will be easier to speak now than to the police. I could give you advice, too. You and I are friends, and you can not deny the kindness shown to you by poor Madame."

"Louise, I know all that. If it had been a question of saving poor Madame, I surely would have spoken before. . . ."

"You see you have an idea, Madame Martin."

To keep this idea which she felt would escape her so easily, Madame Martin whispered in Louise's ear, a precaution entirely unjustified as no third party could overhear this confidence.

"When Martin woke me up I saw that he was rubbing his hair and that it smelled of eau de Cologne. He only uses it on Sunday. That surprised me. I didn't think of it again when he told me the tragedy of our Madame. I just happened to think of it, that is all."

"And you thought of it again, because . . . ?"

"I don't know. Ideas come to you; you don't know why."

"Your husband was rubbing his hair?"

"Yes."

"Didn't you happen to think of it because of that hair which I just showed you, and which poor Madame in defending herself . . ."

"You can't make me say that I suspect Martin. He took the eau de Cologne because he was hot and was about to start out on the road. He's not stingy with his eau de Cologne and he has always been vain. . . . Why, what's more,—and I am glad to remember it,—before he started out on his rounds he put some on his neck and face. You see that doesn't prove anything."

"I don't see things the way you do, Madame Martin."

"You would believe Martin capable of . . . ? Oh Louise. . . ."

"And I have an idea that you too, Madame Martin, are no longer at peace as regards Martin."

"I? I am always worried about him whenever he leaves my apron strings. And at night all the more!"

"Especially tonight, Madame Martin. And moreover. . . ."

They heard voices outside.

"There they are," said Louise.

A policeman asked: "The bicycles are all right here?"

"Not there. Put them here, where there is no chance of their hurting my hortensia."

This reasonable answer of Martin's delivered in the calmest of tones reassured his wife to such an extent that she warned Louise:

"If my husband hears what you have thought of him you'll have to pay dearly for it."

"I! I'm not afraid of anyone."

There were steps on the stairs. Tears came into Louise's eyes for she had just noticed the remains of the cold supper which Madame Germaude had hardly touched moved from the little table where the nurse had served it to the bureau where it was placed with the cherry dish among toilet articles of transparent, honey-colored tortoise shell.

From the corridor Martin refused to enter:

"It wouldn't be proper, Sir. Madame is too undressed."

"I may need you."

"I've told you all I know. It's all on your official report which you made me sign before we started from the police court."

"I want you to come in so that I won't have to rely too much on my memory. I prefer to have you come in with me. You, Bernier, stay at the door with Moncel."

The officer crossed the threshold. He saluted Louise and Madame Martin, took off his cap in the presence of the dead, put it on again, noticed the broken panel.

"The dressing gown, Sir, was not over Madame. I took it from this armchair to cover her. That's all that's been changed."

"Thank you."

The officer turned and urged Martin to join him.

"The body has been covered for modesty's sake, Monsieur Martin; there is nothing to prevent you from coming in."

"I am not very keen about it."

"Martin, they told you to come in. Come in!"

At his wife's command he obeyed. He appeared fastening the glance of his livid face on her beaklike features. Suddenly the latter, her eyes shifting, furtive, wild with terror, impotent to sustain that fixed stare, forewarning blows that would punish this unendurable interference, went to pieces—

"She is going to fall," cried Louise, running to Madame Martin.

The latter, very pale, pushed her off with her elbows. She must have read her death sentence in the fixed and unrelenting expression of his eyes which looked straight into hers. She bowed her head. Still her eyes tried to resist his steadfast glare of incensed hatred, but they shifted in terror. With a commanding gesture she ordered Louise, who was about to speak, to keep still. Then shaking all over, thrusting her thin face towards her husband she placed her hands on her hips and addressed him coldly:

"Martin, fix your shirt properly."

"What? What difference does it make?" the man stammered.

Louise turned to the officer. "Did Martin tell you that poor Madame has a handful of her assassin's hair?"

Mechanically Martin's hand went to his head.

Before the officer could answer he growled fiercely:

"Take me. I am the guilty one. Get me out of here."

"Moncel! Bernier!" the officer called.

Tossing a pair of handcuffs at the first to appear, he ordered him to fasten the man thoroughly. When the unfortunate creature had his wrists well shackled he shrugged his shoulders, sneering.

"Louise, Louise, I am beginning to feel faint!" called Madame Martin.

Louise held her.

"Martin, oh, why did you do it?" groaned his wife.

But it was to his conscience that the murderer spoke:

"It was something stronger than I. I was a man, and I found her so beautiful. Like a fairy she seemed to me! Desire for her would have driven me mad tonight. . . ."

"Come along, Martin. The confession is enough for me," said the officer.

The criminal let himself be dragged away. As he was crossing the threshold he looked back into the room. His face no longer showed anything but infinite sadness. All other expression was lost. He looked at his wife, at Louise, at the corpse as if to beg their forgiveness. At a thrust from Moncel, new in his profession,—he left the room with a long sob.

"Monsieur, can I take care of Madame now?" asked Louise.

The officer thought a moment.

"Yes," he answered, "the guilty one will confess everything. There is no need of any other questioning."

He saluted the living.

"Goodnight."

Again he removed his cap in homage to the victim.

Outside his voice could still be heard expressing blunt annoyance.

"Damn nuisance to have to climb the hill on foot and push our bicycles all on account of that swine there!"

THE DESCENT INTO HELL

By EDMOND JALOUX

On entering the office I was surprised to find someone else there. Gautier Grisol's letter had been of so intimate a character that I had not expected any one but myself to have received a similar one. However, it was certainly Henri Derode that I saw reclining on a corner of the divan; he looked like a sponge just out of water—still wet and swollen; in spite of its being the middle of October he was wiping his shiny face with a handkerchief none too clean, and with his fair drooping moustache and damp greasy hair he might well have represented Discouragement itself. I did not care for him much in spite of his intelligence and the real devotion he had for Gautier Grisol; I felt that he was too adaptable,—and adaptable to everything,—and, easy-going as our epoch is, his lack of stability irritated me.

He too seemed surprised at our meeting.

"Is the Cabinet formed yet?" he asked impressively, as though to avoid a personal conversation which might have been embarrassing. (It was, as a matter of fact, just at this time that the Chambre was making one of its periodic changes of Government.)

"Will our fate be any the less wretched," said I, "if B. succeeds C., or if it is A. who returns to power? In what way do these tricks interest you? Shall we suffer less ill if a new abscess forms?"

"You are quite right, Glandaz; I spoke automatically without considering. One does not free oneself of an old habit all at once."

Our conversation was cut short by the entrance of Claude Guerchin, that is to say Madame de Loussanges, for if I speak of Claude Guerchin under her real name no one will recognise her, as the literary fame of the author of "Le

Voyageur Charitable" and "L'Avalanche," rather exaggerated in my opinion, has completely eclipsed her social record.

If she felt displeased at sight of us she concealed it cleverly, entering at once into conversation.

She was a curious moody person, tall and narrow-shouldered, and seemed to glide rather than walk when she moved—always with an air of listening to someone invisible and waiting for someone to come.

"I have an appointment with Gautier," she said. "And you too?"

We both inclined our heads without speaking.

"Ah!"

Claude Guerchin seemed annoyed. She threw herself down into a leather armchair and, crossing her slim legs, drew a box of Abdullahs from her bag and began to smoke immediately. She looked at us both curiously and furtively, and then leaned back watching the blue spirals of smoke as they issued from her delicately cut lips.

"Gautier—did he write to you?"

"Yes."

"Stranger still! In his letter to me he alluded to some very exceptional circumstance and said he must see me at—at 5 o'clock."

"That is precisely what he wrote to me," said Derode, in his silky cloying voice, which gave me almost a physical revulsion.

"Since his wife's death," continued Claude, "I've never received such a troubled incoherent letter from him. What is the matter, I wonder? He has been so upset and nervous these last few months! I'm afraid he's heading straight for a complete break-down."

The light was fading, such of it as the autumn sky, the mist and the Paris air allowed to filter through. On a table near the divan I noticed a large portrait of Mme. Grisol; even during her lifetime her face had had a far-away look with its eyes almost too wide open and the rather indeterminable mouth, and the very fair hair, that in the photograph looked like an aureole round her head.

"After all," said Derode heavily, "Sylvie was a woman of personality, I should very much like to know just what she stood for in Gautier's eyes."

Claude Guerchin stretched herself like an angry serpent aroused, and, throwing her cigarette into the fireplace, she cried, "His love! You really are extraordinary! You understand everything—except what is human. I have never met anyone so hatefully intellectual as you. Love, suffering and death—for you none of those things exist; you only care about problems of technique. I don't know how Grisol has put up with you for so many years!"

"Doubtless because he is less changeable than you," said Derode morosely, "or because he is as intellectual as I am. You and Glandaz have a silly conventional idea of Gautier. Grisol is an artist, and nothing but an artist, and it's just because of that that my question was not in the least absurd."

"I certainly think that *our* Gautier, Mme. de Loussanges' and mine, does not in the least resemble yours. But who is right?"

Glaude Guerchin was the one to speak; she attacked the problem which we never dared to broach, even amongst ourselves, and her words fell slowly and heavily, with such solemnity that they brought to my mind the thought of something else that fell equally heavily one after another with a dull resounding sound.

"The man who loves a woman for five years and who, on the day of her death, buries with her the only manuscript of the poems which he has written to her, that man is more and better than an artist—above all if he believes, as was the case, that this manuscript is his masterpiece—his only masterpiece."

"After all, that act was not of great significance," said Derode impatiently. "When Sylvie died, Gautier was literally mad; he must have bitterly repented his folly since! He will never write another volume equal to *La Clef du Monde*. There is not any verse like it in French literature; it is Lespinasse in language as beautiful as Baudelaire's. I used to try sometimes to learn a few fragments by heart

and note them down when I got home, but the style is so perfect that even the changing of a word destroys it. I should not be surprised if today he does not regret his poems more than his wife!"

"You are hateful, Derode," said Mme. de Loussanges, leaving her chair to pace up and down the room. "You are like the cuttle-fish with its dark inky fluid—everything you touch you blacken."

"I blacken, just as the mirror caricatures you when you bend over it. . . . Everybody hates the truth."

"Glandaz, come to my rescue!" cried Claude.

But before I could speak the door opened and in came Auguste Beauzée; the sight of his handsome clean-shaven face with its almond-shaped eyes reassured me immediately, I felt sure that his quiet poise and suavity would avoid any awkward situation.

In the four of us drawn together here was the kernel of Gautier Grisol's fame; we were his first admirers, his best friends and his disciples—and we all owed him something. His poetry had reanimated us, and we saw the world with his eyes. Coming at a time when literature had become merely picturesque, he had brought to it something fresh—a rejuvenation and an essence of reality without which it becomes nothing but clever rhetoric.

Surely there was something symbolic about our union: what was Gautier Grisol about to impart to us?

Auguste Beauzée did not ask any questions, but it was easy to see that he had received the same letter as the others. He bowed with the grave formality that marked all his actions, and seated himself on a corner of the chesterfield near the photograph of Sylvie Grisol. We had always suspected him of cherishing a passion for her about which his admiration for her husband had sealed his lips.

"Can you guess the reason for this gathering?" said he at last.

There was no love lost between us; we were all jealous of Grisol's affection, and the least sign of preference he gave

to one or another stirred up bitter feeling. Moreover, Henri Derode had been in love with Claude de Guerchin but had never won her, whilst I, without loving her, had possessed her; therefore he hated me. Claude did not care about me much either but she despised Derode.

Gautier Grisol was aware of all this and managed things skillfully; he would either see us alone or in a big crowd at some function. Our astonishment, therefore, at finding ourselves together can be imagined.

"We none of us know anything," said Claude.

"I'll wager it has to do with *La Clef du Monde*," volunteered Derode.

"*La Clef du Monde* has disappeared for ever," declared Beauzée in his fine deep voice where lurked, nevertheless, the suggestion of a theatrical tremor.

"I'm sure that Grisol's one idea is to re-write it. Perhaps he wants to see what we remember of it."

"Then he would have invited us separately!"

"Still, amongst several people, one memory sometimes recalls another."

"Didn't he keep anything at all?"

"The day after Sylvie's death he destroyed everything, even to the most insignificant notes! The only existing text—if it still exists—is in the cemetery of Père-Lachaise."

"You can be sure that he never thinks of *La Clef du Monde* now; Gautier Grisol is not a man to talk rot. His one aim now is to make a fine work of his *Mise au Tombeau,* for him it is like *Le Second Faust* was for Goethe and *La Tentation* for Flaubert."

I always marvelled at Beauzée's optimism, which usually led him into an error of judgment. And I was therefore forced to admit that Derode might be right—which annoyed me.

"It grew dark, and Claude rang for the servant, who appeared and closed the windows, drawing the curtains. Conversation seemed unnecessary here in this room where Grisol had worked and suffered. How many hours had he not spent mourning bitterly on the divan which now sup-

ported Henri Derode, who became every minute more like a sponge, and Beauzée, who sat like a well-turned statue? How often had he sat at this oak desk on which I leaned my elbow, listening to Claude as she recalled Sylvie?

"I wonder sometimes just what Sylvie was for Grisol," said Derode. To a creative genius like him, a woman is not at all the same as to other men! I can see how he drew his Marie in *Les Vendangeuses* from Sylvie; yet it was Sylvie who posed for the Princess Ella in *Le Char d'Elie,* and the two portraits are quite different. One is a pure naïve child who finally becomes symbolic of that cold self-righteous chastity—an old mediæval idea—whilst the other is a subtle intriguing woman. . . ."

"They have something in common—love of action and a deep instinctive contempt for reality."

"Ah, but that," I said, "is not Sylvie, it's Gautier himself."

"For a man of his sort," continued Derode, "the beloved woman becomes a myth, a symbol; and the more he loves her the more her soul reveals. I was one of the first to whom Gautier spoke about Sylvie, at the time when she was still a mannequin at Beryl & Duphont's in the Place Vendôme. He was already crazy about her and wanted me to see her. I well remember her entry into the big salon—the rhythmic walk, peculiar to the mannequins, which combines something of the slave with the grace of a beautiful animal. She was wearing a very low-cut dress, and the beauty of her neck and shoulders attracted me as much as the brilliance of her eyes. . . ."

"Her back and shoulders!" muttered Beauzée. "When I think what has become of them today. . . ."

"No," said Derode, "they are still here," and he touched his forehead, "and there," pointing to the bookcase where Gautier's books were arranged all in a similar binding. "Three days later Gautier invited me to dinner with her. She was not very intelligent. . . ."

"I don't agree with you," said Beauzée sharply.

"At any rate, I never found her intelligent. But the

myth was growing; Gautier already looked upon her as a sort of goddess; as she had not what we are forced to call 'intelligence' he dowered her with other gifts of a more obscure supernatural order. . . ."

Beauzée shrugged his shoulders disdainfully.

"So although she did not understand things the way we do yet she was aware of them just the same.

"After dinner we took her home, and then went for a stroll along the quays. I shall never forget that strange walk —for it was then that the myth began to take shape, and I was conscious of the mystery which envelops genius. Sylvie, that night, was already the heroine of her lover's books."

"It may be that you are right, Derode," Claude burst out, "but in that case he never loved her. I have suspected as much for a long time. Just a myth! So that's what we are in your eyes? And if not a myth it's worse—simply a convenience! Vile! Why, Sylvie loved Grisol, soul and body—why, she would tremble and change colour when he entered the room. That's love, but your myth! . . ."

I interrupted her.

"You forget you are a writer, you are only speaking as a woman."

"Then we come back to the original question: is the artist a human being who understands how to express himself or an extraordinarily clever conjurer who knows how to throw a certain magic over his tricks. . . . If Gautier is great it is because he has gone the gamut of every emotion, not on account of a perfect technique. The point is, when do you cease to be merely writers and become men?"

Just at this moment the door bell rang.

"There he is," said Beauzée.

"No," said Claude Guerchin, "he always has his key."

"Yet we're all here," jeered Derode, "or has Gautier some other friend hidden away?"

But the sight of Mme. Larderel, Gautier's sister, entering shyly, increased our anxiety, for although we were aware

of the intimate bond existing between the two we had never met her here.

She lived alone in a little house not far from Paris, and rarely left her studio, for her passion for painting was almost equal to that of her brother for literature. There were certain characteristics which were evident in the work of both—a visionary quality, together with an effacement of the picturesque which threw the essential values into stronger relief.

Without knowing Mme. Larderel well, personally we had a great deal of respect for her. Her marriage had not been a happy one, but she refused to divorce and leave a husband who was "queer" and would sometimes disappear for months at a time. Although she was poor and supported herself by her work, which did not sell well, she never complained, finding in her painting a secret joy which consoled her for everything else. Her indifference to material things was so great that she would go about badly dressed as one of the elderly English women so often do when travelling on the Continent, added to which she was extraordinarily shy.

"What is it?" said she at last.

"Ah, so you know no more about it than we do!" cried Claude. "You must admit your brother is an oddity! He invited us all here for 5 o'clock; it is 6 o'clock now and still he has not turned up."

"Perhaps he has had an accident. . . ."

"An accident! Oh, not Grisol, you know him better than that, Thérèse. Much more likely that he has forgotten the appointment! Which goes to prove that the matter is not so serious as we'd feared. Why, even Robert Glandaz was anxious. . . ."

"He's right," said Mme. Larderel in her slow hesitating voice. "I don't know what has been the matter with Grisol for the last fortnight. I am frightfully worried about him. . . ."

"How? Why?"

"He is so restless and can neither work nor eat, always

full of new plans which he never carries out. Only the other day he threw a hundred pages of *La mise au Tombeau* in the fire. I tried to get him to go to see a doctor, but he made a dreadful scene; and, as a rule, you know, he enjoys consulting doctors and discussing medicine and psychology with them—for he is inclined to be a *malade imaginaire*. There is certainly something out of the normal in his present condition, and as he called us all here this afternoon it must be because he wanted to tell us about it."

The clock struck the quarter.

"Another quarter of an hour," said Claude Guerchin, "after that I am going."

Suddenly Mme. Larderel bent forward, listening.

"There he is," said she.

"I heard nothing," I cried.

"I can recognise his step a long way off. You are not his sister!"

Her face wore a smile of calm and happy assurance.

"Now you will hear him."

Within the space of a few seconds we heard the sound of a key turning in the lock, and then the door opening noisily. We heard Gautier's firm tread in the hall and then coming through the corridor leading to his study. At the door he hesitated as though afraid to enter. . . .

"Gautier!" cried Thérèse in a strangled voice, "we are all here!"

The door opened and Gautier Grisol stood on the threshold.

At that time he was about forty-five; a broad shouldered, well built man of medium height. His thick curly hair, already turning grey, surrounded a dome-shaped brow crossed by two deep furrows. His nose was aquiline and imperious, with sensitive nostrils, his lips full and his chin very strongly marked. In his bronzed skin his light eyes looked yellow, and there was something wild and disquieting in the quick burning glances he cast around. The whole man was expressed in his eyes—his feverish desire to know and taste

life, his ardent temperament, so easily discouraged, with its quick changes of mood and love of hard work.

I had never seen him looking so completely worn-out and ill; his eyes had dark circles around them, and under the brown skin was a sort of greenish pallor. His clothes were disordered and dirty, the dark cloth spotted with plaster and clay and his boots caked in mud which crumbled off on to the carpet. Without speaking he advanced to the desk where I was sitting and put down a packet.

It seemed to be a sort of leather envelope, mouldy in places and stained all over with spots of brown, purple, green and black, like festering sores. Gradually a faint sickly odour, like fungi growing in a cellar, spread through the room, and with it something more horrible, quite indescribable, which made one want to vomit.

"There," said Grisol Gautier, pointing to the package, "is *La Clef du Monde*."

For the moment we none of us understood, save Mme. Larderel, who gave a little cry of horror.

Grisol, aware of our stupefaction, continued:

"I tell you: there is my manuscript that I had buried with my wife and which I took from her coffin today."

We remained speechless, overwhelmed with horror and embarrassment. Our feelings were a tumult of different emotions: admiration struggled with disgust and revulsion with anguish. We wanted to pity Grisol and had not the strength. We would like to have retired as from something intolerably cruel and barbarous, and we stood there in silence, feeling him to be at the same time more heroic and more vile than ourselves, disturbed by a courage not of our sphere which we recognized while despising it.

Gautier, who had already untied the string, tore open the envelope, disclosing the sheets of manuscript, which though destroyed at the edges were almost intact otherwise.

"If I had known what I was going to see I should never have had the courage to go down there. And yet Sylvie was still almost recognizable, but that was just what was so

horrible. . . . After this I shall never live as . . . I shall never be the man I was, now that I have been so close to what awaits us all. . . ."

The reaction came first with Claude Guerchin.

"How . . . oh, how could you do such a thing?"

"I don't know," replied Grisol simply. "Night and day I thought of *La Clef du Monde,* and it seemed to me that I had betrayed Sylvie in burying with her the verses that I had written to her, as though I were depriving her of immortality by a gesture egotistical and theatrical in my grief. There is always something theatrical about grief."

Claude Guerchin gazed triumphantly around.

"You see," her countenance saying, "I was right that this literary genius whom I took for a man was only a writer after all, and not of the finest type either. How contemptible! And of all living creatures he was the one I admired and honored most!"

As though conscious of this unspoken reproach to her brother, Mme. Larderel crossed over to him and putting her arms round his neck kissed him tenderly, gazing defiantly at us as she did so. Auguste Beauzée was quite overcome, and gazed, as though fascinated, at the leather envelope which recalled a woman he had loved and whose image he dared not picture at that moment. The half smile on Derode's face irritated me; of us all his hypothesis had been nearest to the truth, his idea of Gautier most like the reality which faced us at the moment. But was this the real man? How many different persons is a man made up of?

Gautier moved from his sister's embrace.

"I'm all in," he said, "give me something to drink . . . no matter what . . ."

Claude Guerchin, who had been the first to blame him, was also the first to help him; she rushed to the bell, and when the man-servant appeared she cried,

"Quick, bring something for Monsieur to drink . . . the old brandy. . . ."

Our friend was overcome by the terrible effort he had made. Claude quickly poured out a glass, which he swal-

lowed at a gulp; that seemed to put a little life into him and brought the color back into his cheeks. He helped himself to another glass, and then stood still as though waiting for something.

I gazed at the stained envelope fearfully as though it were a live thing. It had seen the hand of Death at work as no other witness had; it had lived in terrible intimacy with the great transformation and had been present at a spectacle which none may see without trembling. And now it had returned to us,—bearing what solemn message? These poems full of love and tender confidence, offered to a young and brilliant creature in the heyday of life—who would read them now if they knew from whose hands they had been torn? Who would dare to read this book when aware of its tragic history? How should one judge Gautier Grisol? With indulgence or severity, with pity or horror? I looked at the faces around me, but they were indecipherable. Mme. Larderel was the only one who did not try to hide her feelings. She did not judge her brother; she suffered with him and for him. Nothing in his unheard of act troubled her; she accepted it.

"I called you all here in order to hear something from you," said Grisol at last, pulling himself together. "What? I don't know. Absolution or condemnation? Your silence is cruel. Speak, say something! I have lived alone with this thought for months. I never dared to mention it to anyone, for I felt the faintest suggestion of criticism would have robbed me of all power to act,—and who would have blamed me? Now it is another matter, the thing is accomplished, whether good or bad; I am not responsible any longer; it is something separate from me. But speak, tell me how it affects you,—my old faithful friends. I can't judge myself; it seems to me that I must inspire you with horror, and yet . . ."

"You must be tired," suggested Claude, "perhaps we ought to leave you to rest."

"Oh, no! don't leave me alone, not yet!"

The appeal revealed his weakness; it was the reaction fol-

lowing the tremendous effort he had put forth, and it was because he had foreseen it himself that he had called us together.

"I'm done for," he said. "If not could I have gone so far as to save an old work from oblivion, for if in re-reading it today I find it mediocre what appeal have I against my conscience?"

"You need have no fear," said Derode, "it was fine."

"Exactly," replied Grisol, "it *was*. . . . Is it still today? And will it be tomorrow?"

"No one can be sure about tomorrow."

"Ah," cried Gautier passionately, "when you have done what I have done you must be sure. . . . quite sure . . . "

"You have played your part with Fate. The rest is entirely out of your hands, and remorse is vain."

"I feel no remorse," cried Grisol. "I don't feel I acted wrongly. Do you think I did? Answer me, Claude . . ."

"You have done something which no one has ever done before, and it is extraordinarily difficult to judge. . . . It is beyond us."

A flush of pride colored our friend's face for a moment. It pleased him to feel that he did not measure according to ordinary standards. Can one pass judgment on storm and avalanche? I could read the thought in his eyes; but would he still think like that when we had left him and he was alone?

"You are right," he said. "I ought not to question you thus. But I count so much on your friendship. . . . I have such a fear of disappointing you!"

It was again a call for help, but this time we were better prepared and did not give ourselves away.

"Your laws are not our laws," said I. "Who would think of judging you? If you acted thus it was because it was necessary. You seem to fear our opinion, but you know we acquiesce."

"How weak one is! One only has to perform some extraordinary action to imagine that one's friends will disown one!"

"You run no risk; for you the cock will not crow three times."

He took my hand affectionately and thanked me sadly for my words.

"I shall read *Le Clef du Monde* again; perhaps it will never be published."

This was merely bravado, and we found it as embarrassing as a lie. A man does not commit such an act and then hide his manuscript in a drawer.

As though reading my thought, he added brusquely:

"How do you know what you would have done in my place? If there was just one thing which would give you immortality, who would have the courage to sacrifice it knowingly? Here, we are all lovers of posterity, don't let us forget it."

"Alas," said Beauzée, "we rarely give Posterity any children."

These words were the signal for departure. Claude Guerchin asked Gautier Grisol's permission to retire, saying she was dead-tired; and we each took the opportunity of bidding our friend goodbye. Evidently we could do no good by staying. Tired and worn-out, he let us go, this time it almost seemed with indifference. Mme. Larderel, his faithful Antigone, alone remained. At the door we separated coldly; Derode and Beauzée took opposite directions, but as I was about to take my leave of Claude, she said suddenly:

"For the sake of your old friendship for me, take me as far as my door. I haven't the courage to go in immediately, and I feel so wretched that I hate the thought of being alone."

We walked on in silence; the night was cold and a trifle misty, and round the lights was a halo. Motors sped past us, leaving only the dull red glow of their rear lights. We reached the quays and walked along them towards the Isle of St. Louis where Claude lived. During our early love-making we had often taken this walk under the trees colored by all the varying seasons.

"You are ready to make all sorts of allowances for Gautier,"

she said at last in a tone of irritation. "I could see it at the time when you spoke to him."

"And you, Claude, spoke generously and with deep feeling. Why do you want to spoil it now?"

"All the more because I was sincere. I felt incapable of telling him his act surprised or horrified me. I wanted to be indignant—I know I ought to have been—but have I the right? Was vanity or love the motive power? Did he do it for love of Sylvie or himself?"

"For love and vanity, for Sylvie and himself. All our motives are mixed, Claude, nothing is simple or pure. At bottom we do blame Gautier, and yet we thought it natural for him to make that exaggerated gesture and bury his manuscript by his wife's side. The one makes the other comprehensible. It is the same man who makes both gestures, and they spring from almost the same source, but the first is pleasing to a conventional idea we have while the second clashes."

The lighted windows of the houses along the quays touched my imagination: what hidden dramas of tragedy and passion were being played out behind their panes?

"Well, I know one thing," said Claude more gently, "he certainly loved Sylvie. In spite of everything this was an act inspired by love. He dragged the last proof of his love from her coffin in order to show how marvelous that love was. No woman would have wished him to do it—ever. I was so upset at the time that I could not see it properly. Gautier Grisol emerges greater than ever from that act. Not many people would have done it."

We had reached Claude's house.

"Won't you come up?" she asked.

There was something warm and troubled in her glance.

"No," I said, "we have nothing more to say to each other today."

"Neither today, nor ever, Robert; Gautier is the only man who has always something to say.'

"You should say, '*had* always something to say.' It is finished now. You haven't understood it all yet, Claude. You

have just expressed admiration of Gautier on account of the proof he gave of his love. That may be. But you, yourself, and we too, would be ill at ease with him now. He has gone too far on a road which is closed to us. There is only a step between the superman and the inhuman. None of us could talk freely and simply to Grisol as we did yesterday. He has closed an invisible door between us. He can no longer be either your friend or mine. Today he has crossed the threshold of a solitude which we cannot measure. Those who have gone down to the dead have no place among the living.

"THE BLIND MAN"

By RENÉ JOLIVET

Hernoy began to show signs of life. A cool breeze blew in upon his chest, stirring to action the blood in his veins. He felt very strange and very weak, incapable of making a move, but he suffered no pain. There was a confused note in his head and a ringing sound in his ears. Gradually his mind cleared and his ideas began to arrange themselves in an orderly fashion. He had the impression, in coming to himself, of one who meets a friend whom he has not seen for a long time. Had he been dreaming?

Suddenly he heard quite distinctly someone say: "He is regaining consciousness." This remark surprised him. "He is regaining consciousness?" Who could have said that and for what reason? Had he then been unconscious? But he was feeling so wonderful; he had the sensation of a person taking a sun-bath on a warm July afternoon, so why destroy the charm with troublesome questions?

In a few minutes, however, his head grew very heavy and he felt sharp pains in his arms. Soon the pain descended to his hands and limbs, followed by a horrible taste in his mouth. And now the pain traversed his entire body. He began to tremble with fear and called out for help. As he started to raise himself up in his bed, someone spoke to him:

"How do you feel, Mr. Hernoy?"

"Quite well," he managed to say, "but. . . ."

"But what?"

"It is terrible . . . terrible. What is the matter with me? I can see nothing . . . nothing. Where am I?"

"There, there! Calm yourself. There is no need to be alarmed. A little later you will have some champagne."

He heard people whispering together; heard them leave the room and the door close behind them.

Suddenly the sound of someone breathing nearby came to his ears.

"Where am I?" he asked.

"You are in your bed," replied the voice of a woman.

"Why is everything so black? I can see nothing . . . nothing. And yet I see something: lights. Madam, tell me, what has happened?"

"Now, now, be quiet! In a week you will be cured. But you must not move."

He tried to throw off the covers. He had the painful sensation of having a leaden mask on his face.

"Madam, tell me, have I become blind?"

"You must calm yourself and go to sleep," replied the woman. And tenderly, as though he were a child, she tucked in the covers of his bed.

As the pain increased, Hernoy tried to recall the past . . . the auto-ride, the desire to go faster, faster; the bright searchlights playing upon the road, and then . . . the smash. There was a severe shock; he was thrown out of the automobile . . . beyond this he remembered nothing. And now he awakened with a feeling of nausea caused by the ether and was so weak that he could not move. What had happened to him? Why was it that he could see nothing . . . nothing, except flashes of light occasionally?

"Madam, please tell me, have I become blind?" he asked again.

This time no one answered. The noise of a passing auto bus was the only reply.

Hernoy decided that, since no one would tell him what had happened to him, he must be severely injured. What were they concealing from him? He began to lose courage. "I am going to die," he thought to himself. He started to moan and this calmed him a little. The hours passed.

His mind searched incessantly the key to his present situation; he comforted himself with one thought and grew discouraged at another. He could find no solution and finally, exhausted by the expenditure of energy in trying to unfathom the mystery, he began to think of what he would do when

he would be strong and well again. He would leave for the country and paint a few pictures of the beautiful scenery to be found there and the gorgeous sunshine which he could portray on canvas so well. He would go along the banks of the canals, shaded by weeping-willows, whose images were mirrored in the clear waters. He would return to the small lake where he had painted his most beautiful picture. He recalled the vision of this little lake, lonely and deserted, and surrounded by dead trees, but which would be bathed in a wonderful light when the sun would go down. He would come there when it was time for the sun to set and be thrilled once more, as he had been before, by the marvelous play of light upon the water.

Again he asked the question: "Madam, tell me, have I become blind?"

This idea was fixed in his mind; the more he tried to forget it, the more it returned to haunt him, and each time more sharply. It was like the thought of death: always present. He tried to convince himself that it could not be true: his eyes were perhaps simply covered with a bandage to protect them. But surely, if this were so, the people about him would not hesitate to tell him. And no one would answer his questions.

And now that his mind was cleared, a terrible thought came to him. He thought of Yvonne . . . the accident. Yvonne was in the automobile with him.

"Madam, Madam!" he called.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Hernoy."

"Madam, tell me, the others who were in the automobile?"

"You must not think of that. You must go to sleep if you want to get well soon."

"But you can understand that I must know what happened. Please tell me, I beg of you."

He managed to raise himself up upon his elbows. The effort caused him to suffer terribly.

"Mr. Hernoy, you are not reasonable. If you are not quiet, I will call the doctor."

His head fell back upon his pillow.

A clock in the distance struck the hour . . . seven . . . eight . . . eight o'clock. In the Summer it is still light at eight o'clock. And he could see nothing . . . absolutely nothing. He listened. He heard a noise like that made by someone sewing. "She is sewing," he told himself. It must be light in the room.

"Madam, I beg of you" . . . he began to plead, but, before he could finish, the door was opened briskly. Someone approached his bed rapidly.

"Andrew, poor fellow."

"George, is it you? Tell me quickly . . . Yvonne . . . where is she?"

The visitor took the hand of the sick man.

"Ah, I know," said Hernoy, chokingly. "Yes, yes . . . she is injured? Tell me, she is injured? You do not answer. . . . She is dead! . . . Answer me! She is dead?"

George Duverne, by a movement of the head, silently questioned the nurse. She replied affirmatively by a nod.

"She is dead!" cried Hernoy. "She is dead! Otherwise you would not hesitate to tell me. Oh, believe me, to know the truth will hurt me less than to be left in doubt. Go ahead, tell me."

In the face of the insistence of his friend, Duverne leaned his forehead against the bloodless hand of the injured man:

"She is dead," he said softly.

There was a moment of silence. And out of the silence rose a voice, frail and distant, the voice of a child, of a young girl, a sad voice, which cut into Hernoy's heart and caused him more pain than the physical wound which he had received. It was the voice of love answering to the cry of distress.

When Hernoy learned the next day that he was blind, he suffered little. The loss of the girl whom he loved made him forget the loss of his sight. His blindness was now a blessing to him. He preferred now to live in darkness so that he could the more easily picture in his mind the image of the loved one

who was lost to him forever. In future, through his imagination, he would have her with him always; she would be his silent companion in his misery.

He demanded nothing more, now, than to be left alone with his dreams. He wished to be cut off from the present; it no longer existed for him. He wanted to be left in peace; to dream of the Past. But this was quite impossible in the clinic where he was installed: the people in the clinic paid him frequent visits; he could hear them approaching, walking round his bed and talking in whispers. The noise they made tortured him.

At last the day arrived when his servant, Martha, came to take him to his home. As he left the clinic, leaning upon Martha's arm, his spirits rose. Stretching out his hand in front of him, his sightless eyes in a fixed stare, he walked slowly in the direction of his lodgings.

Hernoy was very happy to regain his studio, situated at Montparnasse. He was glad to get away from the distressing surroundings of the clinic. Through the open window he could now hear the noises of the street, the rolling of the vehicles and the cries of the street-sellers, all of which spelled for him the Paris of his dreams. It was here that he had lived the bohemian and charming existence of a rich artist, the kind of life which was so well suited to his romantic and idealistic tendencies. It was here that he had found, first, the joy of friendship, and then, the wonderful sensation that comes to a man when he finds the woman whom he loves and is loved by her.

The artist soon found himself quite isolated. His friends no longer came to see him, now that he was blind. There remained only his old servant to look after his wants and to brighten up his unhappy soul.

Hernoy gradually grew accustomed to the darkness surrounding him and no longer revolted or cried out against his destiny. He accepted his calvary; he lived with his memories. There was just one thing that made him suffer terribly: the fact that he could not see the pictures which he had

painted. He would have loved to see just once more his reproduction of the various bright colors of the setting Sun. He tried in vain to picture them in his mind's eye; he could visualize a few of the colors, but he could not arrive at a complete composition.

"Martha!" he called.

The servant entered. Hernoy held a painting upon his knees. Martha knew beforehand what he was going to ask her.

"It is 'The Storm' that you have there, Sir," she said.

"Is it? How do you like it?"

"You already know my opinion, Sir: it is your masterpiece. There are black clouds in the sky, trees blown down and a stack of wheat partially destroyed by the storm."

"And the colors?"

Martha did not like to discuss the colors, for her knowledge of this subject was limited. She was acquainted only with the original colors and knew nothing of these obtained by mixing two colors together.

"Describe the colors to me, Martha."

"The cloud at the left of the picture is of dark violet, lighted underneath by a ray of sunshine."

"That ray of sunshine is very bright, isn't it?"

"It is wonderful."

"It is bright red, light and dark yellow, isn't it? I painted those colors in a single stroke. I had just a minute in which to do it; I had just the time to finish before it began to rain and I left quickly."

"You are a wonderful artist, Sir."

"I have been, yes, perhaps, but you see now . . . my eyes . . . my poor eyes. . . ."

He began to grow sad and Martha tried to cheer him up.

"You have done wonderful work, Sir. There are a great many artists who would like to possess your talent even if they had to pay the price of their eyesight for it."

He turned to her with a smile. Martha looked at the scar upon his forehead, which was a livid violet, the result of

his injury, and her eyes filled with a tender pity like that of a mother for her child.

"It is very good of you, Martha, to take such interest in a poor, foolish old blind man. But you can readily understand that I miss my colors very much. For me each color has a soul, filled with light or darkened with shadow. And I have lost all of that . . . all of that . . . forever."

The approach of Winter made it necessary to close the windows and light a fire each day. Imprisoned in his studio, Hernoy felt still more abandoned than heretofore. During the beautiful autumn days, he had been accustomed to take daily walks in the public gardens, leaning on the arm of Martha. When tired, they would take a seat upon one of the benches to be found there, stationed along the paths. The blind man, holding his head high, his hands resting upon his knees, would drink in the warm rays of sunshine playing upon his face. He would listen to the footsteps of the passers-by. Sometimes a child, pursuing his hoop, would stumble against his knees, and he would take him in his arms. Often the child became frightened and fought to free himself.

But during the Winter, he was entirely secluded. At the clinic, he had desired to be left alone with his thoughts, but now in his studio, he was afraid to be constantly thinking of the same thing. Slowly Yvonne's image effaced itself in his mind; he began to take an interest in the happenings of the outside world. His faculties of hearing and feeling gradually replaced his faculty of seeing.

One day, Martha, opening the curtains of her master's bed-room, cried out:

"It is snowing!"

This news saddened the blind man. He began to walk up and down the room. Dressed in his pyjamas, he felt his way along the wall. His outstretched hands told him of the presence of the various pieces of furniture situated in his path. He avoided those with whose position he was familiar. Suddenly he stumbled against a chair and upset it. Martha came in running:

"Did you hurt yourself, Sir?"

"No, Martha." And after a moment: "Ah, I do not know what to do with myself! I am so lonely . . . always alone! My life is finished. Of what use am I now? I am like a wild beast in a cage. There is no reason for me to live. The future can bring neither love nor happiness. Everything is finished for me . . . finished."

She tried to console him, spoke to him of the poor human beings who are without a roof over their heads. Why grow discouraged? Would she not always look after him, provide every comfort?

Each morning Martha carefully prepared the menu for the day. She knew what dishes the blind man preferred. A poor servant, without family, her sole object in life was to please her master and serve him well. She was grateful to him for his kindness. She had a deep affection for this unhappy man and loved to wait upon him.

Hernoy was not aware of the sentiments of his servant, whose age it would be difficult to determine and who was always dressed in worn black clothes. His sufferings rendered him very disagreeable and he scolded her very often. Once, when she remained away too long in making the necessary purchases for the table, he was waiting at the door. He said to her:

"You are a wicked girl, Martha, to leave me alone so long. I know that it is not pleasant to live with a blind man. But if you are not contented, tell me. I do not wish to keep you here against your will. You are free to go, if you so desire."

Martha did not reply, but later on, alone in the kitchen, while preparing the vegetables, the tears rolled down her cheeks. She told herself that the next day she would not remain away so long.

Very often Hernoy would come into the kitchen and take a seat near Martha. She would tell him of the conversations that she had overheard in the various stores. Most of the time she did not understand the meaning of what the people were talking about, but she repeated word for word what she had heard the butcher or fruitman say. At eleven o'clock,

while the meat was cooking, she would read the newspaper to him and describe the pictures contained therein. When the lunch was prepared, they would take their seats at the table, facing each other. She would serve him his food, cutting up his portion of meat into small particles. Her face would become transfigured with joy when he would compliment her upon the excellence of a new dish.

From time to time, an old artist, living in the neighborhood, came in the afternoon to inquire about the health of the blind man. They had known each other in the days when they both attended the School of Fine Arts. The difference in their social position had hitherto kept them from seeing one another.

This artist, whose name was Henry Dole, lived in a small, modest studio. He was a scenic painter of considerable talent. His studio was filled with a number of small masterpieces which he guarded jealously. He sold one of his paintings only when in need of money with which to buy food. He had learned of the accident to his former friend, came to see him at once, and the old friendship was renewed.

Each time that Dole called, under one pretext or another, the blind man, guessing that it was Dole, by the manner in which he rang the bell, would cry out:

"That's Dole."

Martha would admit him and then, as she knew that most of the time he had not enough to eat, would conduct him first to the kitchen:

"Look, Mr. Dole, the good things to eat that I have prepared. Here, taste this waffle: what do you think of it?"

"Excellent. My word, but you are a good cook!"

"Go ahead, take some more. We shall never be able to eat them all."

In the dining-room, Hernoy was awaiting his visitor. Dole, his hunger appeased, would take a seat near the blind man and fill a pipe for each. Then they would discuss "art" until it was time for dinner. Sometimes Dole would remain for

the evening meal, and on these occasions, after the meal was finished, they would seat themselves before the fire and recall the days when they first began to study art. They recalled their early dreams and experiences, and at these memories the dying embers in the fire-place would light up the joy pictured upon their faces.

Martha would wait until after midnight and then she would interrupt:

"Mr. Hernoy, it is past midnight. You must go to bed."

They were both loath to leave one another, but Dole would finally depart, braving the mist of the winter's night, his muffler covering his ears.

One day, after Dole had departed, Martha remarked:

"He comes here very often."

The blind man replied:

"He's a good fellow, Martha. He is the only friend that I have at present."

"Yes, but do you think that he comes here only because of his friendship for you? I think that it is more because he profits by his visits."

"Do not say such ugly things, Martha. He is a poor artist who comes to cheer up an unhappy artist. Do you begrudge him the little aid that we can render him?"

"You must be very lonely indeed, Sir, when Dole is not here! And yet I try to do all that I can to distract you."

As she accompanied Hernoy to his bed-room, Martha made several more disagreeable reflections. He made no reply. She helped him to undress and hung his clothes over the back of a chair. She tucked in the covers, closed the curtains and put out the light.

"You must not get up by yourself," she said, as she was leaving the room. "This morning you broke a statue and you put on two socks of different color."

In her capacity of mistress of the house, Martha visited each room before going to bed, and then, satisfied with her day's work, she went to sleep to dream of her "blind man" to whom she was ready to devote her entire life.

One day, a beautiful Winter's day, cold and dry, Dole presented himself at the home of his friend. The blind man was feeling very melancholy.

"I am so glad to see you," said Hernoy, when Dole appeared. "I was feeling very sad and lonely."

"You must not be sad, my dear fellow. I have brought with me a young girl friend, a very talented artist. She is acquainted with your pictures. Who is not? Do you know that people look upon you as a teacher? Just recently an art critic spoke of your "style." The "style" of Hernoy! The young artists are copying your manner of treatment."

"You flatter me, my dear Dole."

The blind man shook the hand of the young girl. It was a hand soft and dainty.

"My dear Master, I am so happy to know you," she said.

Using the wall to guide him, Hernoy led his visitors into the living-room. The young girl pushed forward a chair and the blind man seated himself. A subtle perfume filled the room.

"Miss Claudette," said Dole, "is a brilliant student at the School Of Fine Arts. Her paintings are already greatly admired. It is too bad that you cannot see her pictures. However, she will be very happy indeed to listen to anything that you might wish to tell her about the subject of painting."

"Helas! I am afraid that I cannot be of much help to you," replied Hernoy. "It has been such a long time since I have been able to see the various colors. I have but a confused memory of them now. Besides, I do not believe that I ever possessed very much talent. My accident has shown me that I have never thought deeply enough. In order to understand how to paint Nature well, one must have spent long hours dreaming; one must understand the relation that exists between human Life and natural Life. Should I suddenly see my old paintings now, I would no doubt destroy them. They contain undoubtedly merely my impressions of the moment. To paint well one must be stirred deeply; one must love profoundly. . . ."

Dressed very simply, wearing the style of hat usually worn

by artists, Claudette listened to the grave voice of the Master. The sad face of Hernoy wore a fixed expression. His large, light-colored eyes, devoid of all light, were directed towards the furniture of the room. In speaking, he did not turn in the direction of his visitors; he seemed to be speaking to himself, to his hidden self, to the innermost part of his being. As he spoke, he felt that he understood more clearly the things which before were obscure to him.

Claudette remained silent, studying the face of Hernoy. She was fascinated by the hidden, mysterious force of the man and profoundly touched by his condition. She approached his chair.

During the moment of silence that followed, Hernoy listened to the rapid breathing of the young girl. Each movement that she made was accompanied by the swishing of her silk dress. He wanted to question her, but the words rested upon his lips. The perfume, the swishing of her silk dress, the heat of the room suddenly recalled to him a distant memory. He rested his forehead in his hands. Two years! Yes, it was two years ago, in the same room, that Yvonne had abandoned herself to him. Two years, day for day! Claudette started to speak, but he stopped her with a movement of his hand. He experienced a feeling of well-being. A ray of hope had entered his heart, so full of misery, and multiplied itself like a ray of sunshine upon the rippling waters of a river. He wished that this feeling could continue until his death.

But it was growing late and Claudette was forced to go. She took leave of Hernoy, promising to return.

That night the blind man could not eat. Martha, alarmed, searched through the medicine chest. She decided to prepare a linseed poultice. When she brought it, steaming hot, to her master, he ran away from her and shut himself up in his bed-room.

"What is the matter with him?" she said to herself. "He must be tired by these visits. Tomorrow I will admit no one."

The next day she told Hernoy of her decision. He

grew very angry and Martha became angry in her turn:

"Very good," she said, "in the future do not count upon me to look after you."

In the afternoon, Claudette returned alone. She excused herself for being so bold and then took Hernoy by the arm to lead him into his studio. Since his accident his studio had been neglected and was now being used as a sort of storeroom. It was filled with boxes and trunks; the windows were covered with dust. In one corner a number of canvases and boxes containing different colors were piled up, one on top of the other. Upon an old couch, dust-covered, rested a large painting which had been started and left unfinished. Hung against the wall were several earthen statues, covered with the plaster-dust which fell from the ceiling. They cleaned away the canvases which surrounded the couch and seated themselves upon it.

"It is not too cold for you here?" Hernoy asked.

"No, dear Master. I am so happy to see your studio."

Hernoy remained silent. He had the same feeling of joyous contentment that he had experienced the day before. The voice of Claudette vibrating through the empty studio recalled to him the voice of his lost loved one, that voice which had so often charmed him while he was painting.

Claudette began to examine the sketches lying about the studio. For each one she had a word of admiration. The blind man listened, quite contented. But when she admired a certain sketch which he thought that he had poorly executed, he protested:

"Oh yes! I remember that one; I painted it one afternoon. I had just finished a picture of a wooded scene. On my way home, I passed by an old farmhouse. I stopped abruptly: the play of light upon one of the old walls of the house, coming from the setting Sun, was wonderful. Quickly I brought forth paper and colored crayons, but I had scarcely begun to draw when the whole effect vanished. When I reached home, I tried to reconstruct from memory what I had seen, but the result was very poor, as you see."

"Why, no! I think that it is very beautiful indeed."

"That old vine-covered wall gave me the impression of an old man filled with the fear of death, drinking in with deep joy the last lingering ray of the setting Sun. I was able only to paint the outlines of what I saw; it was impossible for me to portray the soul of it."

She passed from one sketch to another.

"I see that you painted nude pictures also, dear Master."

"Oh! quite a long time ago."

"They are perfectly wonderful!"

"The model is very beautiful, don't you think so? Her name is Yvonne."

Memories of the days when he first began to paint pictures rushed into his mind, the days when Yvonne used to come to his studio to pose. She was very different from other models. In spite of her profession, she retained her shyness and timidity. It was a long time before she abandoned herself to him. Afterwards there followed a period of passionate folly. And then the fatal accident arrived which put an end to the beautiful dream.

"Did you love her very much?" asked Claudette.

"Yes," he said, with a deep sigh.

"She must have loved you very much, also."

"She was such a good little girl."

Claudette remained a long time without speaking, admiring the other sketches. The idea came to her that, in recalling these painful memories to Hernoy's mind, she was aggravating an old wound. As the blind man continued to remain silent, she looked in his direction. Two large tears glistened in his sightless eyes. She took hold of his hands and said:

"It was wrong of me to have spoken to you of that . . . I hurt you, didn't I?"

He pressed her fingers tightly.

"I have greatly suffered," he sighed. "And now I am afraid of the solitude. It is very good of you to come to see me."

They remained thus for a long time without speaking, watching the Sun go down.

"It is not very prudent to remain in this room," said Martha, as she entered the studio. "It is very cold in here."

The painter and his visitor left the studio slowly, arm in arm.

Martha angrily threw the paintings together into a pile, grumbling to herself:

"I am wanted only to do the cleaning and nurse him when he has a cold . . . his servant, that's all. I wonder if that girl intends to come here every day!" . . .

The visitor had forgotten one of her gloves. Martha hurried after her, but Claudette had already left.

"If I am not here when she comes again," said Martha to Hernoy, "please tell her that I have placed her glove on the pedestal in the living-room."

The dinner was passed in silence. Martha was not in a talking mood. And at night, when all was silent, and after Hernoy had assured himself that Martha was asleep, he went into the living-room, secured the glove and took it with him to his bed-room.

Since Claudette's first visit, Hernoy had changed greatly, In the morning he would arise at an early hour and begin to sing gay little songs, accompanying himself on an old mandolin. He seemed to live over again the days of his youth. Martha, surprised at this change, spoke little. It soon became clear to her that the blind man was gradually drawing away from her; she tried to regain his affections by redoubling her efforts to satisfy his wants. He no longer asked her, as heretofore, her opinion of his paintings or to read to him. There was now a barrier between them. At present, he did not need her companionship to be happy; he could be joyful and gay without her. Slowly Martha began to understand the cause of this change. An intruder was about to destroy her happiness! Was this the payment which she was to receive in return for her many sacrifices: that tomorrow another woman would replace her in the affections of her master? There existed, then, in this world human beings who took a delight in destroying the happiness of

another human being? Was this girl who had visited Hernoy of this type? Ah! it was Hernoy's fortune which was tempting that girl: she was a fortune-seeker! But she would put an end to that. She would see to it that the girl did not return; she would not permit her to become an obstacle in the path of the goal which she had set for herself. This girl wanted to take away from her Hernoy's affection, attachment and appreciation of her services to him; she wanted to give her (Martha) the second place of servant, after she (Martha) had nursed Hernoy through the agony he suffered following his accident, and consoled him during the first days of his blindness. She determined that she would hold the place that she had gained in the affections of her master by the kind and loving care that she had shown him, and she laid out her plans to fight her enemy.

Before sitting down to lunch, she placed on the door, near the bell, a small card, upon which she had written: "Mr. Hernoy will receive no visitors today." During the meal, the blind man was very gay and joked with Martha, who replied in the same spirit. When she was clearing the table, Hernoy said to her:

"Will you please build a fire in the sitting-room, Martha?"

Hastily she brought in the wood and soon had the fire blazing. Clad in his red pyjamas, the blind man seated himself in an arm-chair near the fire-place. In his hand he held the glove which his visitor had forgotten the day before. His face was lighted up with joyful expectation.

In the next room, Martha passed to and fro; she swept the room rapidly and dusted the furniture. She was consumed by a strange fever of excitement. At times she would glance furtively out of the window. The leafless trees which lined the boulevard showed against a smoky, leaden sky. Suddenly footsteps sounded upon the stairs in the hallway. Anxiously, she listened. Someone had stopped before the door of the apartment. Was it the young girl of the day before, and would she ring the bell in spite of the notice upon the door? Martha waited breathlessly. In a moment she

heard footsteps descending the stairway. She breathed more easily. Her plan had worked. From behind the curtains, she watched Claudette as she left the house, walking with her head bowed down.

"Mr. Hernoy," said Martha, entering the living-room, "would you like me to read to you?"

"Do not bother, Martha," replied Hernoy. "I expect Miss Claudette most any minute."

She left him, leaning towards the fire. He sat waiting, impatiently. He heard the clock strike three . . . then four . . . then five o'clock.

"She will not come now," he said to himself. "She must have been detained for some reason or another."

From time to time, he kissed the glove which he was holding in his hand, and drank in thirstily the perfume which issued from it.

The next day Hernoy waited again in vain near the fireplace in the living room. And there followed other days of vain waiting. During these long, interminable afternoons, he would sit and think only of Claudette. Why did she not come? He formed and rejected a thousand suppositions. At times, he thought that he heard her footsteps in the hallway. He waited for her to open the door and call out in her clear voice:

"Good-morning, dear Master."

But, alas! she was not there; he would return again to his conjectures, and despair would seize his heart once more. But why had she been so pleasant with him, so tender? Do women then create only to destroy? Why had she stirred up a troubled feeling in his heart by her tender attitude and then returned no more to see him? It would have been much better if she had never come into his life or had been less tender with him, for he would not suffer now by her absence or the loss of her tender sympathy. She had been for him the hope that a passing ship is to a drowning man, but, alas! his (Hernoy's) ship of Hope, instead of answering his signal, had faded into the mist. He had thought to have

reconquered his happiness and he found that he suffered more terribly than before.

"Martha!" he cried. "Come and distract me; I am suffering. . . ."

Spring arrived. The walks, which Hernoy took each Sunday, with Martha, through the crowded streets, served to make the blind man forget his terrible loneliness. He now felt a certain companionship with the people round about him. Had they not, like him, hidden secrets, sufferings carefully concealed from prying eyes? Is not life made up of misfortunes and distress? The pain caused by Claudette's absence gradually diminished and he became once more calm and composed. Claudette had come to see him simply to console him, he told himself. He had nothing about which to reproach her. He had committed the folly of letting himself become infatuated with her. It was not her fault. She was the music that pleases, but which cannot continue forever; she was the dream which charms for the moment, but which passes with the awakening. He must consider her, not as indispensable to his happiness, but simply as a friend who had come into his dark solitude, had taken him by the hand and had tried to cheer and console him.

As he walked along, leaning on Martha's arm, he reproached himself for his unjust attitude towards his servant. In the joy of the moment, caused by Claudette's visits, he had almost forgotten his guide, his faithful companion, without whom he would be helpless. He suddenly realized how ungrateful he had been to this poor girl who had so patiently supported, without complaining, his constant reproaches and his continual ill-humor. He determined to become once more the affectionate companion and friend of the days gone by who appreciated the many services which she rendered him. He would re-create the former intimate association which had hitherto existed between them. And at these thoughts, his heart grew lighter.

And now, each morning, upon returning from making her

daily purchases, Martha found Hernoy awaiting her in the kitchen.

"What news?" he asked, as he used to do before the visits of Claudette.

"Nothing very much," replied Martha. . . . "Oh, yes! the young artist who paid you a visit once—she is married."

"Ah?"

In a loud voice, Martha read the article in the newspaper which she had purchased:

"'The marriage between the two artists, Miss Claudette Borga and Mr. Forman, was performed, yesterday, at the church, Notre-Dame-des-champs. It will be recalled that both Mr. and Mrs. Forman are the recipients of the golden medal offered by the Paris "Salon" each year for the most beautiful painting. We extend our best wishes to the newly-married couple."

The blind man bowed his head slowly.

Martha folded the newspaper and carried it to her bedroom. She would now be left in peace. She opened a bureau-drawer, from which issued a subtile perfume, and took out a small package of letters that, each day, for several months, she had secretly placed there, one by one.

"Martha!" called Hernoy.

She returned to the kitchen, and lifting up the kettle, she threw the package of letters into the fire.

"Martha," continued the blind man, taking hold of her hands, "I would like you to give me your opinion of my picture, 'The Storm.'"

THE WILD PRANK OF M. CLUNET

By LEO LARGUIER

It was the custom of M. Clunet to take his luncheon at a little restaurant situated on the corner of rue Jacob, where he lived, and to take dinner at home.

He knew how to do things for himself and at that he was very fastidious.

He was not obliged to eat the anemic slice of ham which his maid insisted on buying at a very inferior butcher shop in the neighborhood. He was a bachelor and even though he allowed himself certain delicacies, he never exceeded his means because he knew how to manage.

—Just think of it, he would murmur to himself often while preparing his evening meal, those idiots who spend eight or nine francs, at those restaurants where they have napkin rings, and then complain that the proprietor has poisoned them! It is all very simple. Here, I have everything of the best quality.

He was conscious of knowing how to get along very well, and in fact just a bit vain and proud to pass before some of his friends in the restaurant, as an epicure who did not choose to eat everything. Like the types of grumbling old bachelors painted so well by Huysmann, he believed that everything was a fraud connected with provisions; that the new thin wine was colored with aniline dyes, the most prosperous proprietors used a mixture of margarine composed of animal fat and mutton tallow. Everyone knew how perfectly they imitated the Bourgogne snail with very thin slices of calf's lungs.

At noon, he ordered only the meats which he could not prepare at home and certain vegetables; leg of lamb, roast beef, beef stew or a ragout, as the proprietor came from Toulouse.

Nearly every day he did a little shopping.

He knew the good places where one could buy pigs, feet cooked in lard and *jambon de Parme*. He had great respect for these specialties. This was certain. He bought macaroni and spaghetti from a small Italian shop, and the kirsch which he did not scorn after his dinner, he bought from an Alsatian merchant. In a small obscure street called rue Canettes, he discovered a shop which made a specialty of smoked things, sausages and the kind of rye bread eaten by the peasants of Correze.

He made most of his purchases in the afternoon.

One of his greatest joys was to go to one of the cafés on the boulevard where one finds small tables arranged on the sidewalk, order a glass of beer, which he drank very slowly, as after one's glass was empty either one was obliged to order another glass or leave. These busy waiters from the right bank made little impression on him.

He only felt at home with Emile, the old waiter from *La Chope,* with whom he played dominos each evening. Here he could remain as long as he wished without being molested.

He was forty five years old, the type described so often by the staff officers in their note books; medium high forehead, straight nose, round chin, oval face, no very striking traits. He was neither fat, nor lean, good looking or homely.

M. Louis Clunet was an honest man of medium height. He loved peace and order. He was a writer without much ambition who did not dare to dream of being accepted by the Academie Française, he was obliged to content himself with the Inscription of the Belles Lettres, and it was evident that were he given his choice he would prefer being the crown prince of Holland to being the King of England. He loved to stroll down the boulevards. Two or three times, in the depths of winter, he ventured as far as the gare de l'Est, where he could buy goose livers which came from the Gers.

These he prepared according to a recipe not half bad, —braised in a glass of Bordeaux wine with just a few raisins; but it was really the ragout which brought him here.

Even though he was free from all military obligations, not being a member even of the auxiliary army, M. Clunet was in constant dread of war, and for that reason we will not speak of the years 1914 to 1919.

In his eyes the gare de l'Est barred the place Strasbourg like a bastion. The large grey doors of the barracks with their pointed helmet-shaped roofs opened out on a rainy landscape.

Just to read the names of the villages through which the trains passed was a real tragedy for him, because he could visualize fields covered with explosives, villages in flames, charges of cavalry and the artillery amidst russet coloured smoke.

Four soldiers looked to him like an entire regiment. He detested all railway stations with the exception of the Sceaux, which he considered just a quiet little station of the sub-prefecture, where there was no traffic and where one never even registered a trunk.

The only thing that was missing was the little garden filled with roses and heliotrope, the fountain with its blue enamel plate, a sign that the water was pure enough to drink, and the windows entwined with vines, where the daughter of the station master appeared when the express train passed.

Between the *bal Bullier* and the *Closerie of the Lilacs,* one could only buy tickets for nearby places: Arcueil-Cachan, Bourg-la-Reine, Fontenay-aux-Roses or Sceaux.

M. Clunet had often left from this station himself for Robinson.

But this is another story like the war, that it is wiser not to talk about.

One evening, the 20th of June, M. Clunet stopped before a small Italian shop in the rue Châteaudun. The heat was intense, it seemed as though the rays of the sun were really

making the egg plants and the pimentos, which one saw in the windows, grow. The strawberries arranged on their bed of cotton, looked more like large rubies than like fruit.

M. Clunet decided that in such a warm climate, it would be wiser to eat very moderately, just a slice of *jambon de Parme* and a little spaghetti prepared with tomato sauce. Fruit was too expensive and not very good, but the dry tarts from Milan, dipped into a glass of white Chianti, were delicious.

On entering he had the sensation of being thrown into a pickled meat factory. The air being laden with odours coming from herrings, sausages and black olives. He always visited this little shop in spite of its odours which he found exotic.

There were casks of wine covered with braided straw, and figs from Smyrna as well.

Everyone knew him and he was always served by the same clerk. The latter's skin was tanned and his black hair, glistening with pomade, was brushed straight back and his skin smooth like that of a gladiator.

—Good day, Monsieur—will you have some *prosciuto?* Very well— Just this very minute I finished cutting some slices. I gave you two of them, Monsieur. They are as thin as paper.

Like a juggler he showed him the two thin slices, so very thin that the light penetrated as if through tortoise shell.

M. Clunet consented to accept them, but inasmuch as they had to be weighed he thought that there was too much. So instead of buying twelve raviolis he bought only six.

—Take the whole plate, Monsieur, there are only eight, and the proconsul found them excellent today.

M. Clunet allowed himself to be persuaded, but he was very firm when it came to buying tomatoes, all he wished was half a pound and that is exactly what he bought.

—As long as I am here, he remarked, I might as well buy some macaroni and spaghetti as well. I still have some,

but that keeps very well. The clerk was stupefied to have anyone think of buying macaroni or spaghetti without any parmesan.

He showed M. Clunet bits of unequal size which looked more like petrified stones than cheese.

—The older the parmesan is, the better and more economical it is to buy, replied the clerk in an affected tone.

M. Clunet bought six francs worth, also some crackers, and stammering said that was all he required.

He went to pay the cashier, who was so large that she reminded him of a Bologne sausage.

The clerk handed him his package tied neatly with a string, and then skidded like a Scapin of comedy toward a big fat brunette.

Her bare arms were covered with bracelets, and like all of her kind she was very strong. On the posters of the country fair, one read of her strength and that she had exhibited before the emperor of Austria. M. Clunet ventured to turn around to take a good look at this beautiful customer.

The strong scent of musk with which she was saturated triumphed over the odour of the smoked meats and the codfish which were hung near to the door, and he never could quite understand after reaching the street why he had become a different man.

There are minutes which decide one's fate, other moments when one has the desire to escape from oneself, much as the useless cocoon sheds its shell. They express a sublime work, discover a world, found a religion; the others take the decisions of the stoics and are ridiculous, marry or divorce; smoke their pipes that they have coloured with care, cut their beards, change cafés or swear that they will never drink any more wine.

He who had aways been so timid, took into consideration the warm evening and straightened himself up.

A passerby who unintentionally had brushed up against M. Clunet made many apologies, to which Monsieur replied in a thoughtful dignified manner; that is all right, that is all

right, it is quite evident that you did not do it on purpose—that is all that he needed!

The idiot walking backwards and saluting with his hat, accidentally bumped into a lady of some importance, who had her dog on a leash. This time not alone was he called awkward but was also called a Bolshevik.

M. Clunet had great difficulty in suppressing his amusement, but he feared the wrath of this woman of ample proportions.

Never did he try to cross a busy thoroughfare like rue Châteaudun until the police gave the signal; he then strolled leisurely across, with no fear of being run over. Once safely across he went to a nearby café and seated himself at a table on the terrace. After placing his package on the chair, he called the waiter and ordered a glass of port, to be served in a large glass with some ice. All of this is of importance. In normal times M. Clunet always stammered so rapidly the name of the drink that he wished, that almost invariably when he ordered Byrrh with water he received it without water and when he ordered light beer he was sure to receive the dark.

He allowed himself only three cigars a day, one in the morning after his coffee and milk, and the others after each meal. Taking his cigarette case out of his pocket, he began smoking. He had had enough of it! This was perfectly clear! Was it this life that had made him such a homebody? His small income made him rather independent. He had an excellent digestion and at heart was no worse than many others. All of a sudden the days wasted in the past appeared before him like a whirlpool. He lighted a new cigarette with the one which already had reddened his mustache.

—Firstly, he said, I will not dine at home tonight!—A prudent voice, not yet dead, whispered to him:

—And your package? The spaghetti will keep but the *jambon de Parme* will not be good tomorrow, it is dry and the odour has already penetrated the paper— The tomatoes?—you selected the ripest one, and in this heat, the stuffing made of ravioli will also spoil . . . and besides this package is a nuisance.

—There will always be time to forget it, he said to himself. I will not go home, nothing requires my attention at rue Jacob. I could live there until the end of the month without anyone ringing the door bell, unless someone made a mistake, or mother Bourle who comes from afar or perhaps my maid. I never receive any letters.

He always longed for a large mail, but all he ever received was his tax bill or some advertisements with large headings which were only circular letters. Sometimes the store where he had bought a suit six years ago sent him a notice that they had some new models.

His decision was resolute.

Maybe somewhere in the garden of the Trocadero or in front of the café in the place d'Italie, I may meet someone who may change my life— Waiter!

He paid for his drink, very much master of himself, but without leaving very much of a tip as was his habit in former times; and in spite of his package he boarded an omnibus without any difficulty, never even taking the trouble to notice in what direction it was bound.

He just trusted to luck—

As soon as he had paid his fare he recognized the conductor, as it was the very same omnibus he took every evening. He was only on the platform of *Gobelins-Notre-Dame-de-Lorette* which stopped just on the corner of his street.

—To the very end! he said, coldly, as he waited for change.

As the omnibus jolted down rue Richelieu, he was bewildered by his actions.

Place Théâtre-Française, the people who were going to the matinée crowded about the omnibus. Three women remained on the platform.

They smelt of cleaning fluid, violets and white gloves.

With each jolt of the omnibus, they were thrown forward and backward. M. Clunet imagined them to be a little bourgeois family, mother and two daughters whom she was finding it difficult to marry off. The eldest was thin, a real brunette with flashing brown eyes and the hairdress of the students of the Conservatoire in 1889. They seemed to be

dazed, having just returned from a ball! They spoke of the nude limbs of the Greek hero, the cries of the haggard tragedian and the barbarian luxury of the palace.

As soon as the curtain rose, the scene was charming, they described the nocturnal setting and the thin shapely arm which appeared and partly opened the shutters of a casement window; she threw a rose to a gentleman from Florence, a cavalier.

They were only awakened from their reveries when it suddenly dawned upon them that all this gaiety had meant a large expenditure of money—

M. Clunet noticed that his heart was beating very fast as the omnibus crossed the Caroussel bridge and stopped in front of the post office. He sat erect.

He had never been there before.

The good old peaceful rue Jacob remained the same with its wine merchants, small antiquity shops, its quiet hotels, drug stores, libraries and picture frame stores.

Next to the Charity Hospital it tried to continue like the rue de l'Université and maintain all of its dignity. Near the rue Bonaparte the pupils from the Art School were riding past in their omnibus; and then, just until the rue de Seine it became very narrow, musty smelling with rows of dilapidated houses which one could picture alive with bedbugs.

He gave a sigh of relief as the omnibus moved on. Thrilled to be at the end of the route, all alone, and not knowing what great adventure was in store for him.

He climbed slowly up the Avenue des Gobelins, amidst a picturesque crowd.

Two blond women, out for a stroll, no doubt licenced women, were plying their trade.

Even M. Clunet dared to give them a glance. But he still clung to the idea that he must find the café on the place d'Italie which had seemed so interesting to him some time ago.

It was almost seven o'clock, and with his package under his

arm, he felt like a free soul, in this popular thoroughfare with the glorious after glow of the setting sun.

—One would imagine this to be the day before the fourteenth of July, he murmured to himself, for example these stores overflowing with provisions are terrible— The chickens smell as if they had died from the plague—what are they good for? And those huge mounds of sausage smell as though they came from an American factory. Bah! this is a district of ill repute, that's all—the butcher is probably as honest here as elsewhere.

Two youths lounging in a taxi passed by. It is very evident that these taxis that one sees about here can't help but make one a bit suspicious.

Where do these youths come from? And where are they bound for? One hears a great deal about jewelry robbers, maybe they have such tools and also may carry a pistol in their pocket. It makes one think of a Bonnet or of a Raymond-la-Science, being so near Montgeron.

The sun was bright and the avenue full of idlers and small folk who prepare their own dinners. This pleased him and he arrived in a very short time at the café on the place d'Italie, his heart palpitating wildly just as though he had a rendezvous.

After seating himself he ordered a drink of a waiter, who was very much engrossed in a game of cards with some of the habitués of the café.

From his place he could see the bar, where two workmen leaning against the brightly polished zinc counter were drinking a bottle of red wine. The one with badly neglected teeth was relating an episode which occurred in a certain café where he had been overcharged. Eugenie insisted upon paying for the drinks, he said, but it was my turn, so after placing a five franc note, a brand new one at that, on the table, I waited for my change. I will remember that my whole life. The waiter returned and said that the two meles-cassis cost seven francs.

Seven francs! I paid him, in order not to create a scene, but I did not give him any tip.

This being settled they engaged in a lively political discussion, and the smaller one enquired about a certain Louise, but all the news he received was an expression of disgust for women in general.

It was getting late so they departed, leaving M. Clunet all alone in the little café. He said to himself, no one will think of coming here at this late hour. Just then a woman of very ample proportions disturbed him for a moment as she wished to get the dice out of the drawer. And then all was still, like a deserted world.

A blue card tacked on the wall made the announcement that they served sauerkraut at any hour, and M. Clunet was very hungry.

He called the waiter, who came with his mouth full of food, and demanded what they could serve him. The waiter returned and said that if he would be patient, they could serve him ham, an omelet and calf's liver with a spicy sauce. M. Clunet took in the situation at once and understood that the waiter wished to have time to finish his own meal.

So in order to kill time, he tried to amuse himself with a riddle which he found in an illustrated journal on the table; and a story which might have interested a child of eight. Happily he remembered having put a paper in his pocket which he bought on rue Châteaudun. He glanced through it but did not find much to interest him. Just about ready to throw it aside, something at the bottom of the page attracted his attention.

In an old hotel in Montmartre, M. X., a country merchant, had been robbed.

M. Clunet could just picture the whole little comedy.

M. X. was served a very good wine with his dinner. He was happy and contented with the whole world as he leisurely puffed his cigar. His wife, far away, and whose charms could not be compared with those of the two young ladies who were seated at a nearby table, sipping crème de menthe through straws. The petite blonde gazed at him with dreamy eyes and the brunette smiled bewitchingly.

He did not dare invite them to join him, but as they rose to go he followed them, and at dawn found himself in a small, dirty furnished room, minus his pocket-book. This night that he dreamed might be like the nights of the sultan with his two favourites, ended for him not even amusing. He being accustomed to retire so early evidently became drowsy at a very early hour, because as simple a thing as the odour of eau d'Cologne gave him a sick headache and no doubt the pungent odour of strong perfume with which their lingerie was saturated was his undoing. Finding himself alone, with empty pockets, he realized at once that he had been robbed and hastened to the police station.

Remorse overcame him—a father, head of a family, and at his age! He admired the two policemen at the station— They could not be tempted, working day and night for the public, what brave good fellows they are.

Suddenly a deep affection overcame him when he thought of his wife all alone at home. This good Emilie! For the moment he forgot what a tyrant she had been for the past twenty-five years, and that she was neither amiable nor pretty.

The thought of their old peaceful rue and the sounds of the Angelus from Sainte-Perpetue appeared to him at this time like a beautiful dream.

His thoughts turned for a moment to the room he had just left—where the two girls had lighted all the lights, thrown their slippers here and there, filled the chairs with their lingerie and hung their hats on the candles on the mantel piece, making them look like bells of flowers; the carpet was damp from the contents of a pitcher which had been upset. In one word everything was topsy turvy.—An atmosphere of vice and of a dubious paradise prevailed.

M. Clunet looked at the clock.

It would soon be half past eight, and his dinner had not yet been served.

Ah! I had the desire, he said, I felt the urge to make my

life over, change my habits and my mode of living and here I am in a small ordinary restaurant in the place d'Italie, all alone, waiting to be served a meal which will be probably badly prepared. What am I doing here?

He found himself as alone as though he had been transported to the solitudes of the Causse Mejean.

At this moment a group of young people entered and beckoned to the waiter, who, upon seeing M. Clunet, raised his arms to the ceiling— He had forgotten!

But he reassured Monsieur that dinner would be ready to serve in five minutes. The ham was vile and the pale yellow omelet not sufficiently well beaten, the sauce served with the veal was made of stale dessert wine and the biscuits tasted like a mixture of dust and white of egg.

It was growing late so the waiter put out the lights, much to the surprise of M. Clunet— In this dim light, he recalled a night that he spent many years ago in a hotel near the station of the Sainte-Flour. It was a sad memory.

In spite of the dresser with its mirror, the bed of pine and the curtained windows and carpet on the floor, the room seemed like a prison cell. It was badly lighted and smelt like a third class compartment of a local train. In the drawer of the bedside table, he found some aspirin tablets, evidently forgotten by the former occupant.

All of his resolutions had vanished.

One cannot make over one's life, he said, and I have nothing to wait for— He asked for his bill, paid it, without even looking it over, and departed.

He heard someone calling, Monsieur! eh—Monsieur, you have forgotten something.

He turned about and the waiter handed him his package, which he hung on to like a life preserver.

When he arrived at rue Jacob, all was still. He entered his home as bewildered as a man who was getting out of a train at four in the morning.

After lighting the lamp he noticed a letter under the door. He opened and read it without skipping a single word, it was the tax collector's bill:

Districts } La Monnaie
St-Germain-des-Pres.

DIRECT TAXES, TAXES ON TAXABLE PRODUCTS

NOTICE WITHOUT FINE

(Laws of May 15, 1818, article 51, and July 1911, article 21.)

You are hereby invited to pay without delay, the amount due at this date, on your taxes; for more detailed information see reverse side. Failure to pay within eight days, the law will take its course.

And that's all! he said, as he folded up the green paper.

AT FULL SPEED

By PIERRE MILLE

(To Marcel Boulenger)

Against the wall on a typical console of the Empire period, evidently the place of honour in the office of Molineux-Verkinder at Lille, stood a heavy pair of boots. Although carefully blackened and brushed every day, they plainly showed that the craftsman who, out of heavy leather, cracked but indestructible, had created those monumental objects, as imposing as bastions, and had attached those massive uppers and supple, strong soles, was not a man of our day; he must have been sleeping in the cemetery for at least a century. This impression was confirmed by the unusually large spurs still on the boots, with enormous rowels; they were not attached to the instep, but were screwed into the heel, making part of it. They are no longer made like that.

Molineux-Verkinder was the most important cotton broker of our great industrial region in the North. Like all the rich residents of Lille, he lived on the Boulevard de la Liberté. The house on the rue du Molinel was only used for offices and warehouse. Were I in his place, I'd soon change this state of affairs; for the house on the Boulevard was one of the most ordinary buildings ever erected by the middleclass of the present day, while the one on the rue du Molinel was a perfect example of early Eighteenth Century architecture. Its façade and inner court were imposing and harmonious; and everywhere, behind the pigeon holes and bales of cotton, the woodwork and door panels painted in relief made one wish to see the Molineux-Verkinder home struck by lightning, so that the family should be obliged to come back to live in this marvellous place, now dishonoured by commerce.

I had just enough strength of mind to keep these thoughts to myself. But in order not to show my feelings I pretended to be interested in the boots, and questioned the broker

about them. In our Flanders, nearly everybody is a collector. I thought that the poor man, in the midst of the despised treasure of these beautiful paintings, this charming woodwork, was interested only in examples of the shoemaker's art.

"These boots," he answered complaisantly, "played a fairly big rôle in the fortunes of our house. My great grandfather, Theodore Molineux, had them placed there in 1809 for sentimental reasons. They have never been moved from this place, and my children will leave them there. I believe that the story, being so strange, will not bore you.

"It was my great grandfather who founded the firm about the year 1800. He was, as they then called it, a trader in colonial commodities. Now only the grocers claim that title. The designation was honourable at that epoch. It was applied to wholesale merchants and brokers who traded in sugar, coffee, spice, and also cotton, for which, during the last years of the eighteenth century, were installed the first spinning factories and the first weaving apparatus. Napoleon's continental blockade against England had inevitably resulted in shutting out France as well as the adversary. England could not trade with many of the European ports,—not even with Russia, after Tilsit. But on the other hand these ports could not import much from the rest of the world, as our enemy was mistress of the seas. Soon maritime trading was reduced to smuggling, with the aid of Bremen, Hamburg and Holland; and as in the war that we ourselves have just finished waging, the sea risks caused extraordinary fluctuations on the market.

"Men of Theodore Molineux's profession were able to make great profits. It also happened that at times they were unable to furnish the merchandise that they had undertaken to deliver at a price fixed in advance, as ships carrying it were captured, or the usual smuggling agents had been withdrawn in view of the drastic punishment meted out by the States, which no longer held a shred of autonomy, except at the Emperor's good pleasure. For these reasons speculation was even more violent and dangerous than in our times.

"Molineux was probably imprudent. His disposition was

more impetuous than circumspect. Full five quarters of a century have passed since then; and although it pains me to offend in the slightest degree the memory of the founder of our house, I am obliged to admit that if I were now doing business here with a colleague as daring, I would limit his credit.

"One day early in December 1808 he met at the Exchange Monsieur de Beaussier, one of the principal bankers of the town, and a member of the Chamber of Commerce. Taking him aside Beaussier said to him:

" 'Monsieur Molineux, I have great respect for you. You are a bit rash, but an honest man and a good Christian. I should be very sorry, and so should everybody, if anything happened to you. Take care, there is still time.'

"My ancestor understood that the difficulties of his situation were known. He found himself on the eve of being ruined, perhaps bankrupt . . . our contemporaries hardly realize what that word and the fact itself meant then. Many were unable to survive it. They opened up the pistol box. I have never been able to read Balzac's *Birotteau* without thinking of poor Theodore.

"He returned home. The *Moniteur* had just arrived from Paris. He tore off the band in disgust. 'What do I care,' thought he, 'for all these victories that lead to nothing! There is a fall coming. The Emperor is a man of genius, who uses this genius to build a pyramid upside down. It will fall on his head some day; but I shall be ground to bits before that.'

"As he turned the pages a sentence at the foot of a column, the only one that could have any interest for him, struck his eye. A small paragraph, indifferently expressed, announced that Marshal Junot, Duke of Abrantes, engaged in zealously reorganizing, by order of his Majesty, the administration of the town of Lisbon, gloriously conquered by him, had just discovered an immense quantity of cotton, brought there by the English commercial fleet. If I remember rightly, it consisted of more than a hundred thousand bales, an enormous amount for those times.

"It has always been told in the family that Theodore Molineux trembled all over as if it were very cold, then felt a hot wave in his head. The blood rushed to his temples, and he had to tie a wet cloth about his head. His wife sent for the surgeon, who bled him. After that he drank two glasses of rich old port and rushed to see Beaussier.

" 'Cotton has been confiscated by his Majesty's army,' said he, 'as contraband and belonging to the enemy. To be sold by commissariat, in consequence. If I should arrive there first, it will be mine. But I need money. What interest will you ask?"

"The banker reflected a moment:

" 'It is a difficult job,' he answered. 'But as advantageous for you as for me. I can open you a special credit for the purchase of these bales, for these bales only. If you succeed, the affair will benefit me; if you fail, it is null and void. It is different in your case. Anything might happen to you between here and Lisbon, across Spain which is in revolt.'

"Theodore shrugged his shoulders. He was ready for anything.

" 'And then,' concluded Beaussier, 'in this case your faults are points in your favour. Go ahead!'

"He generously added that custom forbade his exacting anything beyond a fair commercial interest and the usual commission. Curiously enough, his own son made a bad speculation in linen in 1848. We all have our turn. He nearly failed, and it was my grandfather, Theodore's son, who pulled him through. We have a good memory in my family. Besides, there should be co-operation in business. It is to everybody's interest.

"Molineux got up, transfigured with joy and gratitude.

" 'Wait,' said Beaussier. 'Wait! You must be dreaming. You must have a passport for Spain and Portugal. You must also have a military permit to follow the army; I wouldn't give much, otherwise, for your chances of safety. Go straight from here to General Baron Olivier, military governor of the town, with this note from me. He married one of my daughters, as you know.'

"Baron Olivier was an illustrious veteran who had lost a leg in the battle of Montenotte. He had a charming expression and an agreeable voice. No one could sing better than he:

> **Come listen while I swear**
> **That I will always love you.**

What was more to the point was his efficiency. He was able to arrange everything in the twinkle of an eye.

"Theodore Molineux went from Lille to Paris in the mail coach, and he hoped to continue his journey to Lisbon in the same way. At Paris, the clerk in the office of the rue Mayet where he was booking a place startled him considerably by saying:

" 'Well! You are the fifth!'

" 'The fifth,' repeated Theodore, astonished.

" 'The fifth to leave for Lisbon in two days.'

" 'Army officers?'

" 'No, not at all, civilians, like yourself. Two follow the same profession. As to the other three, their papers are not explicit, but I have reasons for believing . . .'

"He winked his eye knowingly as he sharpened his quill. Theodore Molineux was only a bourgeois from Lille, a man of quiet habits. That did not prevent him from making up his mind at once.

" 'Never mind the coach. Give me a horse.'

"He had decided to make the trip from Paris to Lisbon on horseback at full speed. You do not realize, I am sure, living as you do in the century of automobiles and aeroplanes, what 'full speed' meant: trotting or cantering, the quickest possible pace, up to the last relay. Just the time to dismount, to jump on a fresh horse already saddled, and to start off again,—and to keep that up until the end, day and night. You stopped and slept only if you wanted to. Until he reached Lisbon Theodore Molineux allowed himself only two hours sleep out of the twenty-four. He ate a bite, drank his wine or his glass of brandy in a few minutes, at the relays. At that date horses were not used for pleasure or luxury, as

they are today; but everybody rode as naturally as now you take the tramway. There were still places where diligences could not pass, where, moreover, the state of the roads made it impossible for them to pass. And that made real men, let me tell you. Our sports are only a pale imitation of what one was formerly obliged to do by necessity.

"Nothing much happened to Molineux until he reached Burgos. He galloped like an automaton with loosened rein, his face haggard, that feeling in his chest as if a knife had cut into his heart, experienced by all horsemen who overdo it. He was cold, too. No doubt you do not know what it means to be cold on horseback! From the feet, held tight in the stirrups, it creeps up to the back and chest, so that one expects to arrive frozen to death at one's destination. But he galloped! Between Libourne and Bordeaux he noticed a post chaise overturned and a traveller cursing the postillion. That made him laugh and encouraged him. He recognized him: Delebeke of Roubaix. A little before Irun he passed another chaise, belonging to a Parisian, according to what they said at the relay. But three others were ahead of him. Molineux felt his heart contract. I believe he would have had them stopped by the police if he could have assassinated the passengers! He forced on the pace.

"Nevertheless, he stopped at Burgos. Five full hours. Not to eat, nor to sleep. He did not sleep an instant, not even in an armchair. By this time the army posts were furnishing him his mounts. He heard the cathedral chimes, observed the mantilla-draped women and the men in mourning or ceremonial black pass through the streets.

" 'Is it a fête or a funeral?' he asked the soldier who was already holding out the reins to him.

" 'It's for the Holy Week confessions, visits to the Calvary chapel, where these bigots have placed wax images of God, his mother and Magdalen,' said the trooper, a grizzled veteran who believed in nothing.

"It was the day before Easter. Theodore Molineux had not realized it. Ever since he had left Paris he had counted

the days and hours, but had not bothered noticing the dates, nor if it were Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday. He had gone along mechanically, concentrating on overcoming his extreme bodily weariness by will power. He had thought of only one thing, Lisbon! Lisbon and the bales of cotton! In spite of that he impulsively threw back the bridle on the horse's back and said to the orderly:

" 'Put the horse back in the stable. I will leave in an hour or so.'

"He did not add: 'After going to Mass,' but that was in the back of his head.

"It suddenly occurred to him, you see, to confess and take communion. You may think, if you like, that it was a gambler's superstition. But then, as old Beaussier had said, he was a good Christian. Our Flanders at that time were full of people like him, speaking like Rousseau, yet believing themselves damned if they did not fast on Friday. And what did it matter, after all? He would not sleep the next day, which would win back the two lost hours. And it might bring him luck!

"Don't expect me to give you a description of the cathedral at Burgos. It seems that it is now the thing to be able to convey an impression, give a mental painting, as it were, of these things; but it is not my way. Nor was it the way of my ancestor. I remember only that he openly admired the touching sincerity of the faces and attitudes of the people in the Calvary. But he hastened to leave the chapel where the chapter-house had caused a representation of this pious scene to be modeled. It was full of the faithful, who, recognizing him as a Frenchman, turned black looks in his direction. On the other hand, he was shocked at the realism of the Roads to the Cross, the body of the crucified Christ. These effigies were terrible and sanguinary. In the Chapel of the Virgin, the richness of the Madonna's costume, the diamonds and pearls with which she was adorned like an idol, made a bad impression on him. If he had not seen these serious, intense men and women prostrated at the feet of the divine Mother, he would have taken them for pagans. After all he

did not pay much attention to them. The important thing was to find a confessional and a confessor.

"His search took him near the choir, just then empty of both congregation and clergy. In the majestic space, obscurely golden, of the nave which narrowed toward the top, an unexpected sight met his eyes, tragic enough to freeze his blood, as you will see. Theodore Molineux, it seems, however, was more amazed than horrified at first. Perhaps that was because at that moment he did not perceive its reality, believing it to be another wax figure, a symbolic image, the signification of which he did not understand. There was stretched out, as if thrown there in pitiless haste, on the other side of the enclosed choir gates, the inert, already stiffened body of a four year old child. Vermin infested rags scarcely covered him; he was half naked. His bluish flesh seemed to quiver madly under the false, dramatic light that shone obliquely from the stained glass windows. Over his head a large bleeding Christ held out his arms. No, surely this was a pious doll, a make-believe: the body of a little child, dead in agony after a miserable, poor existence. His forehead rested on a step, as if he were lying there in order to sleep.

"My ancestor trembled with emotion and horror. He fell on his knees and prayed. I believe that at that moment he no longer dared dream of the success of his perilous enterprise. All he wanted was to ask God not to let him die, too.

"A priest walked by, tall and thin, with high cheek bones and inky brows; his burning eyes stared at one without sympathy. The priest opened the door of a confessional on one of the side aisles, shutting himself in. Theodore Molineux followed him timidly, and knelt, saying in accordance with his confessional rite: 'Father, bless me, for I have sinned.'

"Through the grill he heard a hostile voice saying that he could not understand French.

" 'I shall confess in Latin,' replied my ancestor, submissively. 'You speak Latin, Father?'

"However, they had some trouble in understanding each other because the accent and pronunciation were not the same. Their ears grew accustomed to the sound while Theo-

dore Molineux recited the *Confiteor*. But the priest's voice was still rude, without unction, even a bit defiant. What did he care for this Frenchman? All Frenchmen were irreligious; they robbed churches, imprisoned and massacred the clergy, defiled the sacred host in the consecrated chalices. This was the first whom he had ever seen pray, kneel, confess, ask to receive the body and blood of the Saviour. What was his purpose? Was he not a spy? Just the same, he was too accustomed to confessions not to distinguish or feel instinctively reticences, dissimulations, and lies. Plainly his penitent did not wish to hide anything, as he enumerated the sins on his conscience with reglementary correctness, following the rules of the catechism in the recital of capital sins, of the violation of the commandments of God and Church. He accused himself of not fasting, not going to Mass. He knew his religion and practised it. He was a true Christian, and a true Catholic.

"Were there still Catholics in France, were there still Frenchmen who did not walk in the ways of the devil? One must recall the blind fanaticism that was burning the whole of Spain in those frenzied days in order to imagine to what point this idea, so natural to us, upset the notions of this Spanish priest who had never stepped out of his diocese, sharing all the passions and prejudices of the patriotic laity, exciting them as one of the many religious chiefs of the national insurrection.

"Gradually his voice became softer, returning to the priestly authority endowed with the august power to make and unmake in the Name of the Omnipotent. Then once more he seemed to be consumed by inopportune suspicions.

" 'My son,' he asked at last, 'if you are a good Catholic and did not come here with hostile intent, tell the truth under pain of having made an incomplete confession, if not sacrilege. What are you doing in this country?'

"Theodore Molineux hesitated an instant. The object of his journey could not offend religion, nor social customs. It was an honest business, not a sin. Yet it was a secret that it would be inconvenient to confide to a Spaniard. However,

his conscience said to him: 'He is right. If I do not tell him everything, the confession will be incomplete. Was it not in order to attract the favours of Providence on my scheme that I decided to seek the penitent's bench? And was not that a worldly thought, nothing to do with my salvation, that I should confess?' He decided to tell everything.

"The priest listened in silence.

" 'Is that all, my son?'

" 'Father, that is all. I cannot remember anything else.'

" 'I am going to give you absolution,' concluded the Spaniard, gravely.

"Theodore recited the act of Contrition. He bent low while saying these words.

" 'Father,' he said afterwards, 'since I seem to have inspired you with a little confidence, I want to ask you something that has nothing to do with my confession, which is finished. My curiosity is perhaps a little rash. A while ago I saw the body of a child stretched out in the choir.'

" 'Yes,' answered the priest, with evident reluctance. 'I passed near you and realized that you had seen. I regret it. Our habits probably shock foreigners, who do not know the reasons. If the child of a poor family dies on the eve of big fêtes, and if this family is able to bring the body into the cathedral unseen and throw it over the railings of the choir, the expenses of the funeral must be met by the chapter-house, on condition that an unsigned paper from the parents asserts under oath, before God and the Virgin, that their child has been baptized, a son of the true church, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman.

"There was so much ferocious grandeur in this custom, yet at the same time such misery, piety and barbarity, that Theodore Molineux's soul was shaken to the point of tears. And then, I have told you what a gambler he was. He believed in acts and little sacrifices that buy luck and procure the good graces of God.

" 'Father,' he said to the priest, 'it is probably not very often, these disastrous days, that a Frenchman confesses and communicates at Burgos. Will you permit this Frenchman to

take the place of the canons for once? Here are ten Napoleons."

"One must admit that this Spaniard, in spite of the holy horror he felt for the invader, must have had the chivalrous instincts of his compatriots. Doubtless he was moved in his turn, but at first he said nothing. Only, he led Molineux to the sacristy and closed the door.

" 'Listen,' said he. 'You want to go to Lisbon by the military route of your army?'

" 'Yes.'

" 'It is a mad plan. This route is constantly being cut by our partisans, and half of the time the convoys are attacked and pillaged. You will never get there.'

" 'By the grace of God. And if I die in Spain, at least I shall not be dishonoured in my own country.'

" 'I insist that you will never arrive in that way. Here is an itinerary that I will prepare for you. The halts are indicated. Twice a day you must give this letter to the village priests of these halts, until you reach the Portuguese frontier. They will furnish you with guides, horses or mules.'

"Molineux wanted to thank him.

" 'You said: "By the grace of God." May God protect you, my son.'

"Eight days later my ancestor was in Lisbon. He was not only the first, but also the only one of his rivals. The others were never heard of again. In addition to the singular adventure at Burgos, where chance had assured him the success of his enterprise, it was a splendid race. That is why we keep these boots and spurs so religiously. Molineux would have liked to have added the priest's strange document, but the last curate to whom he presented it had torn and burned it in front of him. He did not wish it to serve another *Caballero*. At that epoch, Spain was not a country where confidence reigned between Frenchmen and Spaniards!"

LOVE POTIONS

By PAUL MORAND

How touching an allusion to the capital may be when made in far-away colonies; but how much more striking is the reverse. In the Strand it is the waxen fruits, the artificial sheaves of corn and the sparkling mineral specimens in their glass jars that we find so attractive, recalling memories of young and vigorous lands whose resources have not been squandered by bureaucracies. At Lisbon it is the Baroque style of the Manuel architecture that speaks of the Portuguese power in the Indies. And in France, what a surprise when looking at one of Cezan's pictures of Provence we find ourselves face to face with the flat features of a nurse (ayah) from Annam! Holland is the country where one would least expect to find traces of a colonial empire. How surprising it is, therefore, to enter one of the little middle-class houses, beaten by the rains as it stands at the extremity of a deserted brick quay overlooking a stagnant canal, and find it filled with mementos from Asia! That was how I felt the other day when I visited that marvellous ethnographical museum at Leyden, usually neglected by tourists in their wild and senseless rush after "little masters." It is at Leyden, amidst all the confusion of old and imperfect classification and the litter of masks, weapons, idols, etc., in this magic mirror, that one sees that great colonial power—the Dutch Indies.

It is to Van Brok that I owe my introduction to this museum. It was he who first spoke of it to me, last year at a dinner he invited me to at Penang, where many prison stories were told. . . . "Above all, you should see the Kriss collection," said he, "it is as fine as that of Ceylon where the steel blades are polished in such a way that the moment they pierce the skin they are as fatal as a revolver."

Hugo Van Brok had travelled a good deal in the Celebes amongst the Dyaks, and had spent some time amongst the natives of Sumatra where he had carried out the functions of Inspector General of Territorial Councils. The Dutch high courts of justice are held at Batavia, but for the natives —Arabs, Chinese, etc., and for all the non-Christian Asiatics generally, there are local courts which carry out the old laws under the supervision of a Dutch official. It was in this capacity that Van Brok had travelled all over Malay and Borneo and the Barrier islands. In addition to his wide experience of native customs and ideas he had a very profound knowledge of the European colonists and their way of life in those parts; he knew their qualities and their weaknesses, and all about their various adventures.

Seated in our long Sumatra chairs of white rattan-cane, our legs stretched out on either arm and whiskey-sodas within reach, we were enjoying the short hour of twilight between sunset and dark before the mosquitoes make their appearance, on the verandah of one of the native houses, whose very high roofs thatched with palm fibre make them look like a Noah's Ark.

We had been talking of venoms and serpents, and then of poisons.

"Poison is above everything else the crime which in Malay has been brought to a fine art; it is at the bottom of every mystery and felony, always crowned with success and frequently carried on with impunity."

"You open your proceedings but you forget to close them?"

"Of course," Van Brok replied. "Why should I bother about the steps that led up to it. I am a judge, not a detective. I judge cases, I do not bring them to Court. But to return to poisons: my legal text-books on toxicology and medicine taught me very little about them before my arrival in these countries. In the West, poison is out of date. Chemistry has given it its death-blow—even in its last refuge, the penny novelette. Why, even in the remote country

districts a peasant knows better than to use arsenic for fear he may be caught red-handed. But in the East poison remains a favourite method. In the Sonda Islands there are some marvellous vegetable poisons which modern science is still completely ignorant of.

"'*Ce poison que Médee apporta dans Athènes*' as your poet Racine has it, certainly came from the tropics through Persia. The Italians got it from the Arabs (who had Mahomedanised that part of the world), and at the time of the Renaissance they practised it to such an extent that at Florence there was only one word—*pozione*—to designate poison and medicine.

"The Chinese, who discovered everything from gunpowder to communism long before us, are children compared to the Malays in regard to poisons. You have heard of the sinister '*upas*' of Java, which used to be gathered from trees surrounded by dead birds in desolate valleys only by those condemned to death and how the native weapons were polished with its reddish wax (it was here that he mentioned the museum at Leyden), after which the slightest cut was sufficient to produce lock-jaw and all its horrible attendant symptoms. You have doubtless seen the curious effect of datura which causes its victim to stare fixedly at his hands before he dies. . . . Each poison has its own special peculiarity: some throw their victims to the ground foaming at the mouth, while the effect produced by others is insidious and takes years to act; in the XVIth century they were called ironically 'long-dated poisons.' I'll tell you how it happens that I know they still exist.

"One of my European friends, a great strapping Dane, was living in the Atjeh country where he was engaged in the gutta-percha business. He was very much like Ogier the Dane of the Mediæval chronicles and absolutely unsuited for life in these exotic countries, especially as he lacked that stability of character which is even more essential here in the East than in the West. However, it seemed he was happy enough, as he refused advancement when his Company offered it to him. About two years ago I went into his

neighbourhood on one of my circuits, and that explained it all. He was living with an Atjeh woman, and little by little he had fallen under the spell of the local superstitions; perhaps the evil spirits, in which the natives believed, entered his open mouth as he slept and sapped his will power! The woman had glorious eyes; and two ringlets, such as our grandmothers wore, accentuated the regularity of her delicate Indian features. She was a fine type, and as she went to and fro she carried herself with all the dignity of a wife who is aware of the power she exercises. She hardly ever left us. In the evening as we sat talking, our legs covered by sacks as a protection against the mosquitoes, she sat on the ground beside us playing a tambourine, and the slave bangles she wore round her ankles and her massive silver ear-rings kept jingling as she nodded her beautiful head to the rhythm of the music. She had all the well-known Atjeh characteristics—she was taciturn, sullen and proud, and at times blood-thirsty and cruel. The cruelty of the Atjeh is proverbial in the Archipelago, where interminable vendettas destroy the clans; and in spite of his apparent submission the native hates the European, whom he regards as half dog and half human.

"Surrounded by the rubber plantations, whose long twisting branches clung tenaciously to the neighbouring trees—like hungry monsters crouching over their prey—my Danish friend and I gazed at the village at our feet where the gatherers of rubber and camphor had their huts. It was here that he drifted through the days he felt so peaceful, but of whose danger I was aware.

" 'Don't urge me to take a holiday,' said he. 'I loathe the noisy, smoky, anemic West, it does not suit me half as well as these regions which, you pretend, are fatal to the great white races—as far back as the Aryans. . . . No . . . I assure you. . . . I am not attached to this woman. . . . I brought her into my home because she is a beautiful thing to look at, and to save her from ill-usage at the hands of Malay or Chinese merchants. She is gentle and defenceless, and I can leave her when I like. But the time

has not arrived yet. . . . Besides, I hate to see her cry. And I know I'd be homesick for the things I'm used to here—the native huts and the queer-looking building, like a dovecote, where they place the bones of the chiefs, the fresh trout in the morning served with rice, and the "glob-glob" of spring water poured out from bamboo pitchers, and then these nights pulsing with life when I hear the chanting of the Koran in the distance.'

"'You'll pay for all that later,' said I. 'Five years have passed and you haven't been down to the coast or to the mountains, you can't live like that without suffering for it. You'll be done for in ten years. . . .'

"'Quite the contrary,' he replied, 'once, a few months ago, I left this country to return to Europe. I had told my companion here in the rafia dress of my intention to renounce my claims on her and send her back to her parents with an extinguished torch, according to the native custom, as I intended to get married in Copenhagen. I left without provoking tears or family scenes; her farewell words were simply: "You cannot live without me. You need me to warm your heart." The words were like a prophesy. I had no sooner got on board the steamer that was to take me home than my health began to suffer. I had lost touch with European habits of life. I started drinking, and drank far too much. When we'd passed Ceylon I began to have fits of giddiness, and after Aden it was vomiting. At Suez I had fever. I felt that I should never reach Denmark. Something Invisible held me, in spite of myself, the evil spirits called me back to the Atjeh country. In Egypt the doctors ordered me to get to Switzerland as quickly as possible. But I didn't listen to them—instead I got a boat in the opposite direction. And just as soon as I got back to this native bungalow my health began to improve as though by enchantment; this simple native life did for me what civilization had not been able to. At Singapore I had news from my companion. She had sent me a bone and a tress of her hair—symbols of fidelity—which I found poste restante! She was still intent on matrimony—but very desirable in spite of that! And I

found her walking round and round the house like a buffalo round a sugar-press. . . .'"

After repeating these words of his friend, Van Brok added,

"The sight of this magnificent young Viking losing his grip on things troubled me very much, and when I finished my circuit and got back to Batavia, unknown to him, I went to see the Managing Director of his Company and managed to get him transferred to Madagascar. . . ."

"Perhaps he will not stay there long before coming back," said another man gravely, Sir Eroll Dennys, one of the chief medical officers in the Indian Army, "or else he will die there, this Danish friend of yours."

"How do you know? . . . Why not let me confess my heavy responsibility? You guessed?" questioned Van Brok. "As a matter of fact, three weeks ago I had a telegram from Tananarive telling me that the Dane was dead. Suicide?"

"Death due to poison, that's my diagnosis," said the British officer, who was the color of mahogany. "I have lived myself in those regions long enough to know. . . . It's an old Atjeh custom for the women to place an insurance, not on the life, but on the death of those they love. As soon as they see the opportunity they begin to administer poison to their lover, but as they give a counter-poison from time to time the drug does not take effect. They usually put it in the vegetables served with curry, and as long as the man does not go far away all is well. . . . But if, like your friend, he has a taste for travel, then the poison begins to act, for there is no one to give him the antidote, and it is not long before he passes to the next world. Chin-chin."

"A very literary and symbolic story."

"I also knew a French diplomat," added Sir Eroll Dennys, "who had the same trick played on him by a Malay cook—not a woman this time—at Pegou. So you see it is not only bachelors who are in danger. Wherever he went, even traveling on restaurant cars, this minister took his native cook with him because the fellow had poisoned him once for all.

With a cook you can fix things up, but with a woman? It's simply: 'Je ne veux vivre ni avec toi, ni sans toi. . . .' And all the more so because at thirty the native women become hideous old hags. . . . The moral is: 'Beware of local curry, for the better it is . . .' Beware too of the lovely waxen fruit they call 'apples of Cythere' that have a slight odour of turpentine. Your host may sometimes offer you these cut in two by a knife poisoned only on one side—just like those our friend is offering you now," he concluded, as Van Brok passed us a dish containing fruit which they eat before dinner in that part of the world.

"It isn't so much that the women there are fatal—like tropical Lady Macbeths—as the American novelists so eager for local colour like to make out, but that the men are weak," said the director of the Bank of Sumatra. "Do you know that in certain parts there are actual matriarchal states where the government is carried on by women and the servant is the mistress, and the lazy indolent males are shut up in harems where they grow fat and only serve for reproducing the species. Of course there are no white men there, still, if they don't look out. . . . As long as a European sticks to his club, his electric fan and his ice, he's all right, the Western morale saves him. But as soon as he begins to seek the natives' companionship and to live like them, and ceases to go on leave, he is a lost soul—neither one thing nor the other, born to our harder civilisation he lives, nevertheless, in the muddy waters of tropical pleasures. I have known any number of our representatives and associates who have disappeared in this way in the interior. You can recognize them ten yards away . . . they suffer a striking physical change—their skins turn yellow, the colour of iodine, their eyes become oblique and their noses thicken; they are already the fathers of many half-caste children. That deadly lethargy which distinguishes all suicides here falls upon them. No good red corpuscles, a worn-out nervous system, no resistence to the insidious evil of the East, even finding pleasure in its swamps—those are the hallmarks of these human wrecks when one meets them. Van Brok's story makes me

think of another queer chap, a man called Van Mirdyck, who came of a good Leyden family. I went to Siberoet to study in the course of my travels and there I met this Van Mirdyck who was managing a lacquer and wax business. He was a small pale man about fifty, the only European in the district. He hadn't even the excuse of youth. During all the five days of my mission he entertained me in the most delightful manner. The evening before I left he took me out in his canoe which he paddled himself. We floated beneath the shade of enormous cocoanut trees, whose trunks looked blue in the moonlight, in our search for a breath of air, and through the clear water we looked down on gardens of coral lit by the reflection of sparkling stars. Suddenly Van Mirdyck held his paddle glistening with drops of water:

"'You have stayed with me for five days sharing my life,' said he, 'and you know Bata my native maid, you have noticed the jealous care with which she surrounds me and without being exactly the old fool in love of the classic comedy . . . my God, she's only sixteen—still, I admit I am very fond of her. I admire her bronze skin with all its tattooing, her dress of dull red bark and her floating shawl of banana leaves and the chaplet of flowers she wears on her head. She wears a new dress each day, but all she has to do is to gather fresh leaves in the morning. I paid her father five oxen for her, which is a pretty good sum. Everything went well until about two months ago when I was taken ill with a burning at the back of the throat and a feeling of asphyxiation. In the morning, however, I felt better and thought I had probably eaten some bad shell-fish. But after that every day at the same time I suffered from giddiness. . . .'

"'Is there anything out of the ordinary at home?' I asked.

"'Absolutely nothing.'

"'Are you sure no member of your adopted family can be plotting to add your head to those trophies of the chase which decorate your bedroom ceiling? Think carefully. . . .'

"Van Mirdyck was silent, then, as though it cost him an effort, he continued:

"'Well, a few days ago when I was taking my siesta

after lunch, my coffee on the table beside me, I was aroused by a slight noise. I half-opened my eyes and beheld the beautiful Bata pouring the last grains of a white powder into my cup. . . .'

" 'Can you give me some of this powder?'

" 'I kept a little which had fallen into my saucer. I'll give you that tomorrow.'

" 'I'll take it along with me tomorrow and have it analyzed. You will be saved in spite of yourself.'

" 'After all, it may have been only sugar,' said Van Mirdyck.

"A week later I sent word to my host to come and see me at Java as soon as possible. When he came into my office he gave me the impression—only more definitely than in his own island—of a man undermined by the influence of the tropics, a man who was done for.

"I was quite matter-of-fact, and went straight to the point.

" 'Upon analysis, this powder, that your dear Bata put in your cup, turns out to be poison . . . made of a powdered bark. . . . It is a flagrant attempt on your life, my friend.'

"And, knowing that he was incapable of taking any initiative, I handed him a warrant to take proceedings against his companion.

"Van Mirdyck stood still deep in thought. He passed his hand across his brow, hesitating.

" 'For my part, I don't want to make any complaint,' he said.

"I told him that he need take no action; the Queen's justice would do all that was necessary.

" 'It's very tiresome,' he grumbled, 'very tiresome indeed. . . . Bata is very faithful, very devoted to me. I assure you, I have nothing to reproach her with.'

" 'Except an attempt on your life. . . .'

" 'My dear fellow, after all it's only an attempt, an unsuccessful attempt. And then you Europeans, you are really too sweeping in your judgments. You don't understand the native mentality. . . . They are like children: they act in just the same naïve way. . . . To tell the truth, I should

not like to lose Bata; she knows all my ways. . . . I'd just as soon go back and live there with her.'

"'*To live* is a euphemistic way of speaking,' I burst in, 'if you return to drink the coffee she serves you it won't be long before you're in Heaven.'

"Van Mirdyck was silent,

"'I'm going to ask you a strange question,' he said. 'Could you give me the address of a clever chemist who could make up a preventive medicine, you understand . . . an antidote? Then, when I don't feel so well, without saying anything to anyone, I shall take it. . . . Then no one will disturb my well-being . . . neither you nor she. Things might go on like that for years, yes, right on until the end. . . . I mean to say until my natural death. . . .'"

THE PARISIAN

By JEANNE RAMELS-CALS

I

L'Etranger

Marwoll's country was new, it was without any ruins, monuments or great men.

He knew all that was necessary for the son of a merchant. Naturally he never dreamt of dying like a Joseph Bara, never detested Louis XI or adored the chevalier Bayard. In fact there was as much difference between him and a French youth as there is between an uncut stone and a polished one.

His mother was weak and inclined to be yielding; therefore it was with great difficulty that she was able to exert any great influence on the lad after he had once made up his mind. Her pleadings were all in vain.

She would say very often "you are a great disappointment to me, why must that be, it is all too difficult to understand."

His father was quite the reverse in his attitude toward Marwoll, he was very stern and insisted upon the letter of the law being carried out. He was a very arrogant man, and impressed the fact upon his family on the slightest provocation that he was never in the wrong. The characters of the parents are very clearly depicted by the following simple incident. At the dentist's the father would say "do what need be done, kill him if necessary," and the poor mother would plead, "but only don't make him cry." But at the age of seven, Marwoll was far more easily controlled, in fact he began to be a bit more thoughtful of his parents.

As Marwoll was approaching the age of twenty-one, his father came to him saying, "my son, you are a man now,

prove it to me." With these words, he left his factory and returned home and left Marwoll in charge. His father was growing old and felt the need of a rest, in fact he wanted to live in the country and be relieved of all worries concerning the factory. Six days later Marwoll had already made a discovery. There existed in this country a mineral by the name of *troské,* which was very plentiful but without any value. Through a process of refining he was able to reduce it to a metal of great value, which he called *irria.* Of course this new discovery was the cause of much concern and envy among the dealers in *troské.* But Marwoll was unaffected by this agitation. Like his father, he was of a stubborn nature. He was a young man of excellent habits, never drank any wine or alcoholic drinks, was always tidy in appearance and always well groomed. The days at the factory were without any high lights, one day like the next; rather a bit monotonous. After having made a trip through the entire plant, he would leave for a few hours in order to eat his luncheon, then return again and remain until evening, when he would go home, take his dinner and retire. So that after a while he was not much more than a machine, capable of turning out the same product each day.

Regarding women?

He loved his mother and also his grandmother; and sometimes on Sunday he would greet some of the young girls whom he met at the club. A young girl by the name of Mano, with curly golden hair, attracted Marwoll more than any of the others.

It was the habit of Marwoll to play golf once a week. It would take only a very short time to cover the entire course because he played rapidly and walked with large strides. His ideal of an honourable life guided him like a polar star, in sports as well as in the management of the factory.

However, four or five years later, he felt the desire to change his environment. The life which he was leading appeared to him too narrow and uninteresting. He wished to go somewhere else, but where, he did not know.

He likened his life to a fishing boat which had run aground

on the beach, just in front of his window. It seemed dead, and then one day it floated away with the ebbing tide, just as though it was impelled hence by some unknown force—call it a decision if you will!

All was now changed for Marwoll in his attitude toward life. Formerly the sun, the moon and the stars in the heavens were sufficient to create in him dreams of heroes and fables of unknown monsters, but no more, all was now so different.

He was at a loss himself to account for this change of heart! There was nothing left! but—

And it was just now that Marwoll began to dream of Paris. Paris appeared as a city of beautiful colours. It gripped him, the thought of Montmartre, rue de la Paix, Bois de Boulogne, Longchamps, Grands Boulevards, Champs-Élysées, and l'Étoile—Paris with a halo, this was the Paris which attracted him like *le miroir aux alouettes*. He recalled the popular songs which he had heard, and he would whisper to himself Some day you may hear them all—the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, Montmartre and under the bridges.

And he would people Paris, the city of his dreams, with a people whom he called the "Parisians," much as one would people a jungle of birds with tigers and monkeys.

After much thought, Marwoll had made his decision to establish an agency for the sale of irria in Paris, because outside of his own country, this mineral was little known.

He prepared for the trip and then approached his father saying:

I must go to Paris. Maybe you will be good enough during my absence to look after the factory. There will not be much for you to do unless something unforeseen should happen, like a fire or a strike.

His father agreed.

But his mother could not understand, she asked him, and why must you go to Paris? Oh! my God. You have just recovered from that bad cold and have you forgotten about the accident that you had, with your arm at the age of seven? Don't be foolish. Don't go to Paris. There are too many automobiles in its streets, you will be run over! And

the good Lord only knows in whose company you may fall! You! yes I mean you!

After that she became silent, she was all alone.

And on the day that Marwoll departed for Paris, he was enthusiastically happy at the thought of being on his way. His mother accompanied him to the boat and much to his surprise, he found Mano awaiting him also to bid him goodbye. Perhaps she was sad to see him go, maybe never to return! As for him, was he really happy? Their expressions remained immobile, for any demonstration on the part of either would have been scorned.

(One thing was evident and that was that Marwoll would have to learn to laugh as well as to cry.)

After the boat that carried him to a far away land was well under way, he found that all the things which formerly were so important to him, his own country, his mother and Mano, were now slowly becoming unimportant; and as the knots increased their memories faded into insignificance.—Just at this moment he noticed a familiar face, it was one of his compatriots, but he ignored him completely, wishing to forget everything appertaining to his own country, as at this time he was dreaming only of Paris and its Parisians much as one would dream of the man in the moon.

And his mother continued to pray that nothing might befall him O! kind Providence! protect him from the perils of the sea, lightning, the Moulin Rouge, the automobiles, accidents and melancholy, and—and—

But as for Mano, she was content to wait patiently for his return because she truly loved Marwoll.

During the voyage, Marwoll became much interested in the ever changing sea, and as they came in sight of Europe, he exclaimed with the wildest joy: Land! Land! like a Christopher Columbus, but in a different sense. On landing, he took the first express train for Paris.

Long before their arrival in Paris, he had a glimpse of the

Eiffel Tower and he said to himself "Soon I will hear French spoken, that beautiful musical language, and I will be able to learn to speak it so well." He was fascinated by the constant movement of automobiles. He retired for the night shortly after his arrival at his hotel.

His first stroll was down the grand boulevards; he was strange, fearing to look either to the right or the left, but dreaming all the time only of Paris. In a short time however he became less timid and took note of the cafés along the streets, they seemed to beckon to him to come in and take a drink and to watch the crowd pass by. And after passing one after the other, by the time that he arrived at the fourth café he could no longer resist the temptation, and he entered, seated himself at a table and ordered some simple refreshing beverage. And it was here that he saw all the world go by. He was very happy and proud to be all alone and felt like a grown man. He was certain of one thing, and that was, that here he was seeing the true Parisians, in the café and out on the street.

In the evening he visited the music halls. He saw a monkey who was almost human and a man who resembled very closely a monkey. He saw the Russian dancers go through their fantastic numbers. And it all seemed quite wonderful to him. In a cabaret he heard the popular songs sung.

One evening as he was returning home, not thinking of taking a taxi, he was accosted by a man, in rags, who demanded the time.

Oh! leave me alone, Marwoll replied! With this the beggar dealt him a blow, never dreaming that a man dressed so well would be strong enough to return it, but he was mistaken because Marwoll was powerful and with one single stroke he sent the beggar tumbling headlong down the steps. This pleased Marwoll very much. He had often heard tell of the apaches but never believed before that they truly existed.

Following the advice of his illustrated *Guide* he decided to visit another section whose beauties he had only dreamed of from afar. He arrived at the Bois de Boulogne, at the

fashionable hour, and saw with his own eyes the people who were out there on parade. He saw pass by a woman who was strikingly beautiful; he recalled who she was, she was as noted as Niagara Falls or the gulf of Padirac; Marwoll gazed at her with a mingled feeling of timidity and adoration, she seemed to him to be the "sacred Parisian." More alone and more a captive than the leper with his dread disease. She looked upon her admirers with mistrust because they were worthless, or perhaps because she was so vulgar. Was she like so many idols altogether false?

He saw the little lakes in the Bois. Are they real or artificial? he said to himself, shallow or deep? He could not say; and then a little duck made a track all along the river.—

And such were the lakes of the Bois, the Parisian lakes.

He ambled down rue Royale, rue de la Paix, rue Danou, all of which are so noted for their shops de luxe. And then he arrived at that large square where three thousand men were decapitated, after which they accorded it the beautiful name of Place de la Concorde. He saw the tall majestic Obelisque towering above all.

He visited the museums and all the gardens, admired all the statues good or bad, because he respected a city that forbade the use of the *cor de chasse* after a certain hour—that which offends the ear—which prohibits unwholesome industries—those which offend the sense of smell and upon investigation *de commode et incommodo* they knew would offend the eye.

He visited all the monuments of Paris, as well, climbed up the little stairways; when they were high he looked down below, and when they were low he gazed up high; in this manner he saw (*ex et in*) l'Institut upon whose site in days of yore rose the Tour de Nesle. (Marguerite de Bourgogne, threw her lovers into the water without thinking— Ah! youth! youth!)

La Chapelle expiatory, *monument of repentance of a people.* Repentance is a very good sentiment; it is only unfortunate when it arrives too late for anything to be done, as in this

particular case; we have something of a decorative value but entirely useless.

He took note of the bridges, and the place de l'Étoile, with its flaming star the Arc de Triomphe which has need to be so well built in order to support all the honour which has been accorded to it, and from the top one has a splendid view.

The Trocadero, pointing its two towers, like the ears of a donkey, and sneering with the prongs of its windows at the Eiffel Tower, so delicate and high and from which, through its wireless, one can communicate with the whole world.

L'Ecole militaire where men are trained to be heroes; the Invalides where they gather up the pieces. The Pantheon where the great men are buried, surrounded by all manner of respect during life Eternal, that is to say during the time that they are dead.

The Louvre, that large field! L'Opera, enormous and beautiful. L'Odeon, all alone. La place Saint-Germain, where in older days, the judges dealt out justice under an elm.

La Madeleine, patron saint of the fisherwomen, who crowd about her like a hen and her young—

He visited at Versailles, the palace and *la galerie des Glaces,* also the well cared for church,—he had the feeling that it was here that the King went accompanied by his favorites,—perhaps every Sunday and sometimes during the week as well. He visited the Trianon, *le temple de l'Amour;* and the theatre where they gave comedies; they had everything in those days and in spite of the enforced barriers which existed between the people and themselves they were of no avail, because the people were too strong and overthrew them. He saw the secret stairway which Marie-Antoinette should have taken when the revolutionaries were approaching. But Versailles of the past no longer exists, its splendor is vanishing. Formerly the natural water power was used entirely for amusement purposes but now this is gone and it is supplanted by motors, and in the nearby territory of the Trianon, one can ever see smokestacks of factories.

II

The Parisian—? ? ?

Mon coeur n'est pas plus cher qu'un autre.
Pour de l'argent, mon coeur sera le votre.

At first Marwoll was happy and felt so free in Paris; but now it all was different, he had seen all! and was weary of it all. He did not know what to do, he was tired of the cafés where formerly he spent his leisure hours.

He therefore resolved to look after his business interest. But in spite of this excellent resolution the thought of work was none too agreeable.

And at this time, it was not altogether distasteful to have a young lady approach him. She had been studying his facial expression, and thought that he seemed a bit melancholy. They became fast friends at once, and she spoke of his country so far away saying "when one has no friends one is all alone, and when one has no business one has nothing to do." But I am perfectly happy, he replied, I know the world, I know Paris. Does one know Paris if one has never seen the "Parisian"?

This young woman was known by the name of Ramouina. She was a blonde who used a great deal of rouge on her cheeks, and her lips were the color of red ripe cherries. Much like the rest of her sisters. Born, who knows where? Daughter of the world and for the world. To Marwoll she represented the "Parisian".

"Au restaurant"

And what wine do you wish, the waiter demanded? Marwoll was just about to reply as always: "Water if you please." But he said nothing and Ramouina ordered the wine. This was a new experience for Marwoll (probably not the last.)

"I won't drink a drop," he thought to himself. But then in order to appear polite, he had to take some. He sipped

it at first, and with each sip he became more talkative until he was in fact intoxicated and became quite gay.

The waiter appeared a second time demanding if they wished a liqueur. Ramouina made the choice as before.

After dinner they went to the theatre to see *La Souffrance,* which was given by an excellent cast. Both of them were much affected by the intensity of the plot and wept like children.

Then they were off for Montmartre and the boîtes.

It was in fact a wild debauch, followed by a succession of others even more thrilling, and at last he woke up and his first thought was of remorse and he said to himself "My poor mother, is she thinking of where I am?"

III

The Parisian at Paris

Some evenings later he wandered into a gambling house and like so many others he won some and lost more. He was no longer strong in body nor firm in decision, he hesitated about everything. And a short time after he fell so ill that it was necessary to take him to a Doctor who sent him to a hospital. He recovered after many weeks, but the illness left him in a weakened condition. All he could think of was his good mother, his father, the factory, work, his home and rest. And the young girl at home by the name of Mano.

He realized that he had failed to carry out his resolutions, that he had done nothing about irria and furthermore he lacked the courage. He realized that he had been a visitor of an enchanted palace, walked through its salons, dined in its beautiful halls, but had only come in contact with the apartments of the domestics, never having visited the apartment of a superior woman.

One evening as he was chatting in a café with Ramouina, he met his old friend. How well he looks! and how happy I am to see him, were the thoughts running through the mind of Marwoll. And was it not a bit ironic that the very thing

that he had tried to escape before, brought to him now happy thoughts? His country? Because this man did not represent for Marwoll a man apart, but a definite place, a certain family, he represented his own country.

They did not separate again but walked down the boulevards and entered one of the restaurants in order to have a visit. His friend loved Paris! He enjoyed himself immensely! How! Marwoll was bored. And with as charming a woman as—

Ramouina.

Follow me, dear friend, was his friend's advice. Marwoll however was not listening to him at all, he was gazing at the crowd, at the ceiling, the carpet, and watched the waiters serve the old wine in a knowing way—

You don't like Paris because you don't know it, his friend continued. His friend's circle included many brilliant people.

One day this friend took him to a salon in Passy, it was a notable gathering which included nobility, artists, those who had been given decorations and accorded other recognition, beautiful diamonds, pearls, evening gowns of lamés: *le Tout Paris!*

There were people there from all parts of the world. Here are the real Parisians, his friend remarked to Marwoll.

Do you see that man who is sitting near the window, his name is Henry Subreville. Now from a business standpoint he is a very important acquaintance.

He introduced him to Marwoll, who told him all about his business interests, and how after much experimenting they had arrived at producing irria. Suddenly Marwoll was aware of a young woman who was seated near to him, she was Mrs. Subreville, they smiled at one another and became friends.

I came to Paris both on business and pleasure, and I am leaving because I am bored to death.

Oh! she replied, simply for amusement is indeed boring.

Anyway I can tell everyone that I have seen all the monu-

ments in Paris, and also that I have visited Versailles, I have seen everything and I know Paris.

But my dear young friend, I am very certain that you don't know Paris at all.

Don't know Paris! after all my wanderings and after all the hours that I have spent in reading the *Guide*. His friend had made the same remark to him yesterday, and he challenged him in the same manner. But he believed in this young woman—(he felt obliged to believe that her statements were the truth, and he believed in her all his life).

I have been all over, Marwoll stated again—

And how about your new friends, Marwoll?

Have you ever been at our home? You really must come, Mrs. Subreville replied.

He promised to call! Business! Friends! He shook hands with them all, paid his compliments to his hostess, a young woman fifty-five years of age.

Upon reaching the street, Marwoll's friend asked if he had not introduced him to an interesting young man.

Marwoll replied in the affirmative and also said that he was certain that he would be able to do some business with him.

And did I not present you to a charming Parisian also?

Yes, she was very attractive and he was pleased to hear her called a Parisian.

Paris?—Paris? Where are you? Who are you? These are the questions which Marwoll was asking himself.

Diogenes was searching for an honest man and Marwoll was searching for Paris.

Paris should have replied to him, I am not only the streets, the squares and the boulevards; I am not only the boîtes of the night life of Montmartre, the large stores, the public monuments, and the streets which are frequented by such as Ramouina. I am the homes, the schools, the laboratories, the workshops, the factories—

"I am the factories which the engineers direct; those intelligent men; in fact both sexes work hand in hand in some factories; I am the laboratories where the scholars work; then schools, the best in the world, where studious youth

dreams of its future; the workshops where the great artists are trained.

"I'm all over; in the stores, the homes, where so carefully are guarded infancy, adolescence, maturity and venerable old age; the good old families, the faithful couples; good husbands, and young women of whom I say nothing because there is nothing to say.

"Maybe I am also a heart, so firm, so dignified and so secret that I do not know if you will ever find the key!—

Everything was so peaceful and in such excellent taste in Mrs. Subreville's home. She arranged the flowers with the greatest of care, having the faculty of choosing just the vase best adapted to enhance the beauty of each flower. Roses would be placed in transparent jugs so that one could enjoy their artistic stems as well as the blooms themselves. The tea table added another distinctive note to this unusual apartment, as did the old family portraits and her well used library which was not selected for the harmony of its bindings.

The very first time that Marwoll called at this charming home, he felt quite at ease and unusually happy. It almost seemed that he had actually been pulled out of Hell.

He admired everything.

(He was right but it was by mere accident.)

He admired the portrait of the great grandmother of Mrs. Subreville as a young girl. It was a work of art.

Marwoll remarked to Mrs. Subreville, at your home all is so different, there is nothing like it in the world, it is most extraordinary.

Oh no my young friend, she replied, there are many others just like it in Paris, where things are made possible to fasten friendship and good faith.

"Bien élevée et de très bonne famille"

It seemed as though all the culture of past ages were concentrated in Annie Subreville, the result being that she made one think of an exquisite flower. After Marwoll had

been in her presence, he experienced a feeling of exaltation; as though greater things were yet in store for him.
He was certain of seeing Annie and Henry Subreville again. Ramouina had been waiting for him for two hours and was quite angry, and suggested that they leave at once in search of an evening of frivolity.

Go alone, and goodby!

He left and she remained behind, stunned, angry and very unhappy.
She looked at herself in the mirror and a shudder of dire despair and remorse overcame her as the realization gripped her of what she stood for in the world, and that everything about her was false.

Henry Subreville and Marwoll had many business meetings regarding irria, and after much hard work they were successful in creating a demand for irria in Paris.
Mrs. Subreville was present at many meetings and offered many valuable suggestions. She was also a fine pianist and would sometimes play for them. Her repertory not only included things which were gay and light but also more serious pieces. Marwoll was impressed by all, and would listen to her by the hour. He was so happy in her company. One day she began to tease and poke fun at him, and then all of a sudden she became serious and regarded him with a feeling of pity, like a Notre Dame of courage and of healing, a Notre Dame very kind, and without a pedestal, living on a very simple footing and who might have said to him: "Conduct yourself better! Get hold of yourself and stop all that nonsense my friend." And then she grasped hold of his hand tenderly.
I understand all— You are a mere child who has been misguided and who is unhappy. Tell me all—
And he began to relate his experiences.
Being still so young it was easy for him to discontinue the vicious habits that he had formed. He gave up cocaine without the least difficulty.

You must not feel obliged to send me flowers after you have dined at our home, or make conversation in order to entertain either Henry or myself. Nor is it necessary to have your neckties and socks match, these are all nonessential; all I ask of you is to work and lead a life which does not make you lose your self respect.

She created in him a taste for literature, other than the newspapers or sporting journals, if the latter can ever be called literature.

Marwoll had lost all desire for adventure. He loved Paris now, the Paris of Annie Subreville.

Marwoll's mother wrote very often to him begging him to come home as his father was growing too old and feeble to have the care of the factory, and she always ended her letters by demanding an immediate reply—but even though Marwoll wrote at regular intervals, he always failed to reply to his mother's questions.

As things had gone so well with irria, Marwoll decided to have a stand at the Foire de Paris.

He visited the *Roseraie de Bagatelle* with Annie one day, here he saw all the beautiful roses.

His booth at the Foire was a great success and attracted much attention.

What makes you so pensive, Mrs. Subreville demanded of Marwoll.

I am thinking of all the unknown friends who go to make up France, and I am also thinking how strange it was that we did not meet sooner.

Where could we have met before? Your day was our night and vice versa.

Tell me, Mrs. Subreville, when I return to my own country, will you come and see me sometime?

Henry will surely come, but as for me, I must stay at home, that is where I belong.

And have you no desire to visit another country? or are you like all the French people satisfied to remain always in France?

There is something lacking in every country, some are too hot, others too cold, others deserted or where there is little food to be had, some where one never can laugh, others that we know little about and understand less. We do not feel the same necessity to travel that the Cook's tourists do— What is to be gained by leaving our beloved France?

And even to see me again, you would not leave France?

And even for that why should I leave France? in as much as you will return.

And Marwoll replied:

You are right.

Yes, Marwoll will return and many other strangers to visit Paris! So bad and so angelic! city of cities! Some will come in search of the bad and others the good and beautiful. "*Chacun selon son coeur*—O Paris!"

One day in the early springtime, Marwoll went to the country home of Henry and Annie Subreville.

They went there by motor and enjoyed the countryside immensely. And even though they had been some hours on the road, before they knew it, they were at the gate with the sign "Chamin interdit, Propriété privée, Défense d'entrer."

It was just about sundown when they arrived and it all seemed to Marwoll like fairyland.

The change of scene and the rest made Marwoll a new man.

Everything in the entire house revolved about Mrs. Subreville, her beautiful spirit dominated over all.

IV

Départ

A cablegram from Marwoll's mother made it imperative for Marwoll to go home at once. Things were going very badly at the factory and there was a strike on.

So one day he took leave of his dear friends. He returned to his home and found Mano awaiting him. He would have loved to marry her maybe a bit later on—if only she had been more Parisian—had resembled Annie a little more—
His father had aged very much, and everything was disorganized at the factory. Shortly after his arrival the news spread of the large sales of irria in Paris, this attracted the attention of those living in the surrounding country and in a very short time Marwoll had completely reorganized the plant and he had gained the respect of all.
He looked upon it all as an attainment—Paris—that monument, that spot, those people; then all became effaced from his mind, and all he saw was the figure of "Annie."
The *vraie* Parisian.
And he closed his eyes with this beautiful image before him.

HUMAN FRONTIERS

By GEORGES RIBEMONT-DESSAIGNES

I remember Pou Island, said Ulysses. But do you know what an island is? It is just like any other land except that we know it is an island. When we know it, we can no longer live there, and we find out right away. The air is stale.

Pou Island was bought by Mr. Arthur Beef, a very wealthy man who had been discharged as cured from an insane asylum. Some say he had never been mad, others that he had always been mad. However, the fact is that he had killed his wife because she resembled the mistress of a man whom he had met in a café, as two drops of water resemble one another. He killed her in that very café, before the man and his mistress. Jealousy made it impossible for him to endure the presence of a person having such a resemblance, that is, a dominant part of his wife, near a gentleman whose mistress she was. You say that all he had to do was to kill the unfortunate woman she resembled? A nice how do you do! That would have complicated matters! He would then have had to live near his wife thinking that, as one drop of water is like another, she looked like the dead mistress of some other fellow; that is, with the certainty that a part, perhaps nine-tenths, of his wife had belonged to this unknown man, and that nine-tenths of the body he held in his arms were unfaithful, and what is more frightful,—dead. He preferred to kill her outright and thus change his life.

He was locked up in an asylum following the explanations he gave of his crime. But ten years later, because of the stability of his reason and his exemplary conduct, he was liberated.

I got to know him later on, in this fashion. In a news-

paper I read the following advertisement: *All you who have felt human justice and despair of good, all you who flee from the hand of God, because it has been withheld from you, I offer you the means of making your lives over again by disregarding goodness, men and God. Write to Arthur B. this paper.*

That day I was sitting on a bench, watching a crowd of men and women pass by. Actually I was lying on the bench, one might have thought I was sleeping, because I was drunk. Was I really drunk? Did you ever ask yourselves what the men you meet sleeping on a bench in the open air are doing, or on the parapet of a quai, or along the roads by the fields, after night has fallen? Have you asked yourselves what they are and what they do? They are motionless, like the dead. When you pass near them, ah, ah, you are sure that their flesh is not like that of other men. Did you ever dream of touching the flesh of one of those men?

I was on a bench and with half-closed eyes I observed the continuous movement of the passers-by. Thus I asked myself what they were and where they were going. What a fearful ant-heap! I saw them in their mad haste, as if the ground had swelled up first in one direction and then another to let them roll along more quickly. Yes, I asked myself what they were doing and where they were going, and in spite of myself, I saw them with their bones covered with flesh and the essential organs of their bodies, all out of breath, as a result of their labors. They were going to work. Or else, coming from work. Those who were through went quickly to their dinner. I heard the clicking of their teeth and that little noise of saliva that obviously no one hears, but which I guessed. And then what? They would sleep and do what they had to do and fornicate. And I saw them alone, understand me, alone, as they are when they are sure nobody sees them, and when their being changes into that of an animal full of fleas and itching. Then they would take up their work again, quickly, quickly. Tomorrow they will pass through this street once more. They will gather in a group somewhere, and in order to feed their

stomachs, they will manufacture or sell something. And the trimmings! The trimmings of all this! The nerves, the pleasures, the irritations, the suffering which only cover up this daily harness like a pretentious dust cover! Why all this, I asked myself? Why should one even ask why? Would it not be simpler to throw everything over, to scatter everything, old papers, and souvenirs, registers and inept proverbs, in which their efforts are summed up ironically. There is not enough blood-shed. There is not enough effort to improve things, nor are there enough pleasures without a reason why. All right and good, that the belly should eagerly open a little way, but not in the name of morals and the future.

There were women who passed by, stirring the air. Women —they are the frightful part of this mechanism. Ah, why must it be, when we have held, willingly, or by force, amid sighs and revolt, her by whom we wanted to be renewed, as if she contained the whole world and its power, and when we have absorbed her suddenly in the degree in which we empty ourselves into her,—why should it be that as soon as it is done we recognize with implacable certainty that everything is useless, that everything is finished, that we shall have to start over again with another woman, because . . . isn't it so . . . do we ever know . . . till the next time when we shall find out again that there is nothing to be done . . .

But they, women, what do they really think? What are they, what are they, and what do they hold in their hands? Does it end for them also quite suddenly? . . . With me, you see, it sometimes happens that I look brusquely into their eyes, without any reason, beyond the little surrounding scales against which one grates one's skin to feel something and note just the continuous breath of time. Thus I look at them and see only death. Something changes underneath their skin, around their eyes and the corners of their mouths, the smile of their glance turns sour. They look for help, help against the only thing for which there is no defense. They are there between the spasms of sobs and those

of enjoyment. Anything at all at that moment, but nothing comes. I stop looking at them. They stretch themselves. One might say that they delicately shake their wounded skirts and think at last of something else. The ornaments quickly are inscribed in the air, the sky, the ground.

And men, the idiots! My beloved little brothers! My kindly idiots. Ah! what horror men are! Let us excuse women. The more ignoble of the two, she hides her aim under her ignominy; but just tickle her chin, or kiss her breasts, and she will open up like a flower that tries to fulfill its task. But men, what are they here for? Everything is lie and falsehood, in a hard crust, and not in rice-powder, in a cement crust, in a crust of lava and feldspar. Let us pull the beard of that judge, with his fat warm body under the black and red cloth, let us take him outside and box his ears and then take his pants off. Look here, Judge, can you keep a serious face with your decisions? I bring in a wench who lifts your shirt, or else a knife that slits you open—does nothing of all this hold? Do you believe that your work is serious and that your seriousness is also serious? There, there, old man, good body, soft and warm with its odour evocative of a man and not of a judge, that's something else, that's the satisfaction of Venus or blood and agony, but nothing else. Then why? Man's noble elements, not those of his shame, are repulsive.

I was on my bench with closed eyes; there was enough room between my eye-lids so that all the men and women could be seen passing by. But I, I, what was I really? What was I doing there with my revolt? Had I repudiated and torn up the ornaments and ribbons of life? If I fled from the hand of God, because it had avoided me, just like the others, what did I do this for, this simulation of sleep on a bench like a drunken man? Suppose I jumped to my feet and stopped them with my fists to prevent their advance by crying: "Stand back, at the end is death!" Yes, yes, they would laugh in an embarrassed way—or rather they would be furious. But afterwards? What would be changed for me? Nothing, nothing, nothing. Let him who wants to be a good

apostle preach! And what a marvellous relief to have preached!

At that moment I rose and left slowly. A newspaper was lying on the ground. I gathered it up, like a box of lozenges we know we shall never eat. Although I did not want to read it, it forcibly spat into my eyes the advertisement of Arthur Beef: *All you who have felt human justice and who despair of good. All you who flee from the hand of God, because it has been withheld from you, I offer you the means of making your lives over again by disregarding goodness, men and God. Write to Arthur B. this paper.*

In spite of the ridiculous grandiloquence of these words I wrote to Arthur Beef. And I learned what he had gone through with. At least in my memory this is how it happened.

Some time later I found myself at sea on a steamer chartered by Arthur Beef. I had time to meditate, no longer stretched out on a boulevard bench, but on the deck of a ship. No longer did men pass by, snatched along by some mysterious, abominable thread which they did not have the courage to cut. There passed only eternally identical waves, waves without life, which take hold of the mind and perform over it a service of healing ointment.

I had time to meditate. But did I meditate? I had cut the thread in question, as far as I was concerned. I had no life any more. In the hollow of the waves my eyes did not retain a single image. I thought neither of the evening nor of the morning. Nor did the crests of the waves bring within their brief space of time the parcelled-out beginning of the days I might anticipate as belonging to a new mode of life. No, I had no life any more.

Still I knew it was only a period of waiting. I had seen Arthur Beef and that man had offered me simply a resting place for my feet and air for my lungs on the island of Pou. According to his explanations, what was the surname one might find for the Island of Pou? Isle of Liberty? Devil's Island—island of this, that and the other thing? All labels disappeared. But Arthur Beef swept away what the other

side of the world had called evil, whatever belonged to the domain of Satan, as the lovers of angels say.

In order to have an assured place on the Island of Pou, it sufficed to be at loggerheads with human justice, either in its legal aspect or simply that of the censorious tribunal of public morality; but you must have been annoyed and punished, I repeat, by the chastisement of the law or else by public maledictions, for having acted according to the liberty of your individual instincts. The clever, unpunished crook, living to the detriment of the group, in honor and peace, was excluded as a calculator of crime. At least that was my understanding of it. But it sufficed for admission to have had just about enough of things, no matter what the reason.

It took really a curious enthusiast to indulge such a fancy, and I suppose that the steamer which carried the innocent name of Bel-Air was just a pretty jar of cast-off fruit. In reality she did not seem like that. And the passengers on the Bel-Air were nice people who would not have hurt a fly, at least judging from their appearance. They strolled around the decks as is customary during sea-voyages. Of course, there were women and among them mothers with their daughters. What were they fleeing from and what bonds were they breaking? While following the crest of the waves, this idea came to me mildly. Groups were organized and played gravely; others made music. And I got to asking myself if a why had ever come to me at the sight of a busy crowd, or if anybody even, no matter who it might be, ought ever to be faced by a why.

Arthur Beef appeared almost never. But he was accompanied by one Castor who was thought to be his secretary. Then suddenly he never appeared at all. When questioned, Castor replied that Mr. Beef was meditating with a view to the accomplishment of his task, and that he remained in his cabin.

I do not remember any other detail of the journey. At last we had to land on Pou Island after a trip lasting forty days, and I noticed that a slight fever gripped the pas-

sengers, when they set foot on the island bristling with cocoanut trees, where not a living being appeared to wish them the most elementary welcome. Everyone was face to face with the future. We should have to put one foot in front of the other in order to go anywhere. The waves of the sea were behind us.

I think the following morning I was awakened by someone who said to me: Listen, Ulysses, Mr. Castor is going to speak.

Arthur Beef had not appeared during the landing of the passengers and the material, nor during the installation of the tents on the shore. And now Mr. Castor climbed on a big rock and began to declaim:

"Comrades, I am speaking to you in the name of Mr. Beef. You know why you are here . . ."

Suddenly I had ceased to hear the voice of Mr. Castor. For me it became confounded with the rustling of the palms. But my eyes had taken especial precedence over my ears and what I saw prevented me from hearing. There are cases, like this, where a big noise, or the sound of a trumpet prevents one from enjoying a meal. So I looked around: the people who were there seemed to me entirely new. Were they the same who had surrounded me on board the Bel-Air, when nothing was visible save sky and water? I turned my eyes in every direction and stopped when I saw a corpulent lady and her daughter, to whom I had sometimes spoken during the trip, especially towards evening when the brain had seemed to hang from the skin of the sky by a big silver thread, supple and fine. The smile of the lady and the look of her daughter stayed by me, while I asked myself as through a fog, who those persons were: I had difficulty in recognizing them. There was certainly something changed. Instinctively I turned around and saw at a certain distance from the shore the contour of the Bel-Air, motionless on the calm water. I saw the steamer and the sea, and then near me the sand and the rocks and the ground covered with vegetation. Then our tents and all the stores of necessaries for our new life. What then was this moving? I started again to question myself and felt such an irritation that I

tapped the ground with my foot. At the same time I thundered with a voice which was piercing enough for me to hear myself above everyone I saw:

"But where is this Mr. Arthur Beef? I have several things to ask him."

At once a number of persons turned around and looked curiously at me. I even think that the lady and the young girl in question sent me a little sign of understanding. And at the same time they seemed ignoble to me. But I paid no heed to it, because Castor, perched on his big rock, appeared before me with the clothes and the look of a Protestant pastor in the midst of a sermon. And in fact, after looking at him twice, I saw that he was dressed like a pastor with a frock-coat and a stove-pipe hat. His voice at once pierced the veil of appearances which engrossed my eyes and I heard his words:

"Yes, comrades," he said. "This is normal. For at bottom you understand that there is a norm, an arithmetical mean of the spirit, I might say, for those who understand me immediately, and for the others I will say: we must needs go our daily jog-trot. And this is only possible when there are cars! rails! engineers and brakemen! Ah, ah, isn't my comparison a good one? Comrades, do you want to find happiness at last? Here is your aim, if I am not mistaken. Rails! You must above all else place rails on this track, and adjust yourselves to their direction. As regards the engineer, I think I know where he is, as well as the brakeman. It is, moreover, in the name of Mr. Beef that I am speaking."

He spoke very fast and in a monotonous voice. I really believed that a telegraphic ribbon was coming out of his mouth already printed and this ribbon was going to wind itself in serpentine fashion around the branches of the cocoanut trees. But I also believed that this ribbon was of tin, notched like a saw, and that it sawed my marrow and brain into very soft rundles which fell at once on the ground amid the trampling of the attentive crowd.

"I know well," he continued, "that some will play with the name of liberty. But I stop you there at once. We have

broken with the earth, haven't we? And down there they talked to you about liberty until they made an iron collar out of it. The liberty of goodness has a fine iron collar. Well, what was white has here become black, and what was black has become white. There is no question of liberty. It is a word that is prohibited, and when we shall have public monuments, we shall certainly not write on them: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. Either we are free, equal and brothers, or we are not. But if we are not, we shall never become such. Here lies the vice of the societies we have left —to imagine that sentiments can be forced, and in the name of these imitations to want to imprison the instincts which are lifted toward the light. But when I tell you in the name of Mr. Beef that liberty is not in question, it does not mean that we are against liberty; but if there is one vain word, it is liberty, and it has nothing to do with what we are doing here. And now let us get to work. All for the happiness of each one? Hum, yes, that's it. And each one doubtless for the happiness of all. I've read that somewhere. We must profit by our reading. . . ."

He continued to speak fast, with the same tin voice. I cannot say whether or not there was unanimous sentiment uniting his audience, or if there was a majority among them. Insensibly in the heart of the mass before him, groups had formed, hardly distinct from the others. People exchanged rapid remarks in a low voice. But I only know that I cried out:

"No, no, all this is tiresome. I don't care a rap for your talk. I did not come here for the happiness of humanity, but for myself. Where is Mr. Beef?"

Castor interrupted his speech and sent a withering look in my direction. Then he continued in a still louder voice which had become more and more tinny:

"Comrades, I say that black has become white and vice versa, white has become black. I want to say that we, too, will be in possession of power. Civilization is a force, because it has a moral system. We, too, will have a moral line of conduct. But here is where we, the exiles of Pou, will be

different: our line of moral conduct will extend toward the depths, while that of those good honest people will go toward the heights. Do you understand the difference? They have their summits and we have our abysses. What with them is plus 20 is with us minus 20. To give you an example —they have an army to defend the group. Here is the group that will defend the army. Consequently, the latter, or rather what would be the inverse of the army of down there, would hardly be more important than a toy. There is nothing left for it but to disappear, albeit it has been proposed that for memory's sake this virtual existence be given to Mr. Arthur Beef. On the other hand, the group, having become the strong party, what is down there the army, has no reason not to call itself army, because it sustains its functions. Thus we have an army dilated to the greatest possible degree. . . And you may all be proud of being members of it. . . ."

A slight humming rose from the lips of the audience, like whir of wings of a flying swarm, which permitted the metallic chips spouted from the tongue of this astonishing pastor to fall gently as though on a bed of saw-dust. For I do not believe the manifestation was one of discontent. For my part I began to find that the preacher gave them a very indigestible sermon.

"After all," cried Castor, "this might give you a symbolical idea of the army you are to constitute. There must be, of course, a command and ranks to distinguish those who take part in it. Whether it be here or there, the change from private soldier to marshal is effected by increasing the number of stripes. Here all the soldiers, that is the great majority of men, will wear the maximum of stripes. The number of these stripes will decrease with the rank of corporal, and the marshal will wear nothing on his sleeve, nor on his cap. Now, you will say, are all the soldiers to be marshals then? That is not entirely it, and it is even better than that. They, the marshals, will be soldiers, which I think is worth a marshal, since it is not true that men are equal—what nonsense —but are worth as much one as the other, and to prove this, they will have to carry on their soldiers' sleeves the insignia

of the marshal. As regards the marshal, he will also see that a man and another man do not make two men save through an abuse of power, for men, comrades, cannot be added together. And he will see what a marshal is without his stripes. That is, a very feeble force. But to show you that there is no question at all of humiliating an individual, in the manner of the undisciplined we left behind, it is understood that this function of the marshal will go to Mr. Arthur Beef."

I burst into such laughter that the grim-looking serpentines of Mr. Castor's voice stopped suddenly. This time the orator had enough: he made a menacing gesture in my direction and swore:

"God damn it. I know what I'm talking about, and what I say shall be done. Who is this tame spirit that belongs still to the past centuries of civilization, and tries to . . ."

"—Excuse me," I cried, "it is not I who talk about civilization, but you . . . you don't even do that. What you propose is inept. It is exactly the same thing we have fled from, but the reverse of it."

—"You are not only one of those minds whose softness I vomit, but among them still a child at its mother's breast," yelped Castor. "And for children I say they must not play with certain things in certain gardens, for there are wolf-traps. Here they are, look at them."

Whereupon I saw at Castor's feet three creatures whose aspect made me think. I had seen them, moreover, on board the Bel-Air, and during the landing, but I had attached no importance to them. The feeling of importance now seemed to come entirely from the fact that I saw them together. They were three very dissimilar beings, but who appeared absolutely inseparable, as soon as they were together. And these three beings were women. The three Graces, you would say, or the three Fates. The number three interests the imagination. It is also the real beginning of the plural. But in this circumstance there was question only of three women Castor called his wolf-traps. They were his body-guards, as it were. Ah, ah, the body of Mr. Castor was

well guarded by these three females. One could not have any doubts as to their being women, nonmales, albeit each one of them was repulsive in her way. But wolf-traps? A strange wolf who would let the essential part of him be caught in such a jaw on springs and remain imprisoned there, howling at death.

Later on I knew their names. Castor called one of them Leonie, another, Georgette and the third one Mme Chou. Leonie was a big woman with blackish hair which fell over her face like leaves from a frost-bitten plant. She had a skin that was dirty and oily and black eyes without lashes, teeth irregularly broken like the posts of an old palisade, and behind them her tongue could be seen, like a caged hyena, pacing from right to left and left to right, indefatigably. The corners of her always half-opened mouth seemed gnawed by some bad acid steam or a persistent humidity. But all this was as nothing compared to the two enormous hands which one suspected as being shaggy on the upper side, and which she directed slowly at the end of her arms in a frequently repeated movement, one after the other, from her abdomen which stuck out like a keel, to her high breasts.

Georgette was quite different. Beside Leonie she was very small. By herself she had no size. She might just as well have been very large or very small. You know these caterpillars that by a curious sort of imitation take on the appearance of a dead twig or put themselves straight along a branch as soon as they are threatened by danger: You grasp them, and they move, soft and strong at the same time, both worm and serpent. But since we are talking about caterpillars, do you know also their aspect when they are about to become metamorphosed? They lose all motion and their skin becomes pale and transparent. They have the same feeling, dead or alive. Well, Georgette seemed one of those caterpillars imitating the wooden twig, motionless and soft at the same time and also fearfully strong. And the appearance of her flesh was like that of a caterpillar ready to transform itself into a nymph. Even her eyes fitted in with this aspect. Living and dead, moving with an impressive slowness, they

turned the attention away from an insignificant face, as insignificant as a caterpillar's head.

As regards Mme Chou, she was the beauty of the group. She had a young and charming face, a fresh complexion, as fresh as one of the pretty wax women in the show-windows of beauty-shops. Her body was harmoniously proportioned. But still she had three apparent defects: her neck showed signs right and left of former scrofula. She gave out an odour of old flour in a box, and when she fixed her eyes on you, you noticed that she had such a strange convergent squint that you felt dizzy and irresistibly lured against your will to the point of falling,—struck and snatched by a fearful living harpoon.

I think that while looking at Mr. Castor's three wolf-traps, I must have shown a face of such terror that the audience began to laugh. I stammered a few words, I made a gesture that might have meant: Very well, very well, I'll say nothing more, I'm convinced—And I was going to sit down in the last row of Castor's listeners. However, I felt that a look different from the others was weighing on me. I turned around and saw indeed that the young girl mentioned before was standing beside her mother, and was looking eloquently at me. You understand what is meant by eloquence? It is independent of the meaning of the words pronounced by the orator. I don't know what her eyes were saying, but it seemed to me eloquent. Held by a mortal solitude I surrendered to my fate, my hand in that of the young girl.

Without understanding why, I began to blush so violently that I woke up. I was on a bench. That's all I ever learned about Pou Island.

Translated from the French
by EUGENE JOLAS.

THE SILENT HOUSE

By PHILIPPE SOUPAULT

Since I have lived in this silent house I have been surprised to see the large tree which grows before my window turn slowly round and round. All the hours here, as elsewhere, have their sounds, their goings and comings. Life seems to rise and fall. But each day the hours resemble one another. Only the great tree, green, red or yellow, I do not know which, changes its aspect. I see it through the network of curtains trimmed with lace. I observe it and I cannot look at it without a touch of anguish. I am afraid I shall not find it there. During several weeks, some months, perhaps,—I have lost all track of time,—it has never been twice the same. I watch it, I turn my head again and again. I close my eyes and open them. It is there, shuddering slightly, and already different. One leaf, two leaves have fallen and a little light passes back and forth through the new opening; a dead branch appears blacker than before.

It is fond of silence, of the night, and that vague light which hangs like a cloud above Paris. It gathers the meagre rays within its foliage, the rays, glistening with humidity, which are thrown out by a nearby street-lamp at ten o'clock in the evening. In this calm, I believe I see it twist its branches, display its leaves, inhale and exhale. It becomes solitary. By opening a shutter to admire its lustre, I startle it. It stands there, like a king, master of the garden and of shadow.

And in the morning it showers itself with brilliance. The leaves it lets fall are not like tears. It seems to distribute them magnificently, like large gold pieces, inflexibly enriching the lawn.

One by one I watch the hours glide by, then softly disappear in the small garden I explore and which I discover

little by little. The turf-colored patch of cemetery, the low stone wall, the crooked alley, which leads I know not where, —all the vegetation, so poor, so dry, is familiar to me. It is like me, a Parisian, in this cold suburb. There is a bench. Yesterday a young man, accompanied by an intern, came to sit down there. The large tree took on a deeper yellow and sent out a stream of light like a projector. I watched the man who, seated as if he belonged there, smiled softly, breathed in the air and the odour of the earth, then took a few steps and came back cautiously to sit down again.

I observed his actions with as much interest as a child feels in watching a June bug, with a sort of restrained passion, so that I was afraid the door of my room would be opened,—I did not want to be obliged to leave the window. He walked with a slow and lackadaisical step, disregarding the golden tree; its radiance, which gushed like water, did not attract his eye at all. He made a turn about the lawn. I saw he was dressed in a long, dark-grey cloak, light straw hat with a black band, and thick yellow boots, very pale, like those worn by hunters or chronic invalids.

He walked in this fashion for an hour, perhaps more, and I kept my eyes upon him, for something turns my head if I close my eyes for a moment. He kept up his unvarying march in a circle. Then he disappeared and I heard him mount the stairs to his room which is above my own.

Already I hear a dull winding and gropingly I recognize the refrain of the gramophone which stretches itself like a snake and uncoils. Up there, in a solitude similar to mine, a disk turns and I hear "Tea for Two." I picture the man lying at full length, like me, alone upon the bed, opposite the clothes closet with its mirror. All the furniture is littered with articles. A coat on the chair lets its sleeve hang over on an easy chair, on the table is a half-folded newspaper, a toilet case, and here and there are vases of flowers. The mauve light of an electric bulb is reflected in the glass and, now and then, when he raises himself to adjust his pillows, he sees his face in the mirror. His face. I know he is indifferent to everything, that nothing outside himself, neither

the flowers, nor the light, nor a movement in the corridor, nor even himself, could hold his attention one instant. He thinks of nothing. He lives. He lives, as I do, meandering through the recesses of his empty body of which he expects nothing more. The light which parades before us and reclaims its place shows us that it is daytime.

The objects are unchanged. There is the whiteness of the sheets, the grey painted walls, the grinding of the doors, the croaking of the bed-springs.

I asked one day who this man was and someone told me he was a sick man called Nijinsky.

With all my ears I listen to the noise of his footsteps on the floor. He goes, he comes. I hear him turn. I close my eyes to shut out the sight of a young man far below in the mist who is holding a rose in his hand and leaping to and fro. I close my eyes. I have forgotten. Also I hear an old madwoman who powders her hair, stirring in the parlor on the ground floor beneath my room. She opens the piano. She has chosen at random a torn old sheet of music but she recognizes the piece she plays, for she still retains a trace of memory. Again she looks out over the candles of a salon (is it a salon of Poctiers, or of Sainte Menehould?), her gown trimmed with garlands of tiny roses, her scarf. . . . She plays the "Invitation to the Waltz." Overhead Nijinsky is still walking. He steps around the bed, silently. O fame, I am tossing you a smile. Then suddenly I hear together with the old, cracked waltz, the gramophone droning "Tea for Two."

It is only in the garden that I see spectres. The fall is reminiscent of summer. It is, perhaps, five o'clock in the afternoon and the tree, the great tree shudders. Night is coming. Hours which will never sound again have passed. The air is still mild, almost listless. I know that in murmuring Paris the bells are beginning to ring, the night is falling, one by one the store windows are lighted.

I think of all my neighbors, those whom I see from my window, those whose voices I hear, remote in their solitude.

I am eager to know about them and when the nurse brings me a soothing narcotic, I question her. There is the man who decorates himself like an old soldier, who throws out his chest to display his red rosette and who is always expecting someone. He pulls out his watch every two minutes, raises his hands to the sky and cries out: "They will never come again. Oh, my family. I am forsaken. What misfortune." Always the same words, and the same pacing back and forth. At midnight, at one o'clock in the morning, he looks at his watch just the same and utters an exclamation. He cannot sleep, so he gets up (I hear the bed creak) and starts walking again. I visualize him, going from one end of the room to the other, in nightshirt and slippers.

Sometimes in the morning I hear furniture being shoved about. This is the work of an old woman who is indulging in her mania for housecleaning. She moves all the furniture, rearranges it in her own way, pushes the dresser in front of the window, the bed against the door. . . . If the watchfulness of the attendants is relaxed a bit, she sneaks down to the reception room to rearrange things there. One day she worked so hard that she used all her strength in rolling the piano in front of the door and, exhausted, fell asleep. Someone had to climb in through the window to enter the room.

I see also that rather quiet man with eyes of angelic blue who walks in the garden and then suddenly stands utterly still. After the birds have gathered near him he makes a terrible gesture to chase them away. Then he smiles as if he had gained a great victory.

Turning from the window, I hear footsteps once again upstairs,—footsteps like those of which I saw the traces in the hall of a grey and abandoned château with a name as soft as a bird's song,—the château of Maria Pia. There a guide showed me the hall of lost footsteps, where a banished king, forgetful of his youth, wore out the flagstones pacing from one end of the room to the other. He, too, had lost his memory. One of the most beautiful landscapes in the world lay at his feet. From the window the fallen prince could look

out over earth, sea and sky, but he lowered his eyes to watch only his endless and invisible path, to scrutinize the cold stone, grained like the skin of a hangman.

Perfumes denser than the voluptuous laughter of golden-skinned girls arose from the forests.

What did the world matter to him? Four walls, a door, the tireless chant of a water jet, formed a prison for his weariness, perplexity and his unhorsed glory.

In the room which shelters me, I don't know for how long, lives a man who had held on to his memory and who suffers from it as if it were a cancer, red and inflamed. I envy Nijinsky who knows nothing of his past, nor his fame.

But I must live with myself, and I gnaw slowly at the liberty I have loved so much. Perhaps tonight, as during the preceding one, I shall be obliged again to think of that which burns within me, of the suffering so strong I seem to breathe it. That which has nourished so many heartaches is there, in spite of me, in spite of me, because of me. This evening it brings to me once more the recollection of eyes which turn in their sockets, arms thrown forward, memories of a back, shaken, shaken. And again I feel my face muscles harden to keep from crying, and my shoulders ache because I have not opened my arms.

It is for this that I enjoy my suffering,—because I dream of sights I have seen, suffering I have caused, of things I have endured. I call to it, I await it.

Memory, memory! My daily enemy, my horror.

You, up there! You walk, you pass by, and you have forgotten, you have forgotten everything.

I know that my neighbor is not troubled about a rose, nor a waltz, nor the universe. I guess that he thinks of his old age, that some day his muscles will shrink and that he will no longer be able to walk around the green turf which constitutes his world.

Since it is Sunday, the silence is more profound, more absolute than usual. The man I am thinking of will not take a walk today. He will be left in his room. He will seat him-

self in his easy chair and stare at the gramophone. The world has ceased to exist.

All is not lifeless, however, since I dream of the throng which, on the outskirts of Paris, crowds around to admire a little bay horse, sweating and panting. I think of Longchamps. An intern has left a sporting paper on the stairway. I know (no one can conceal it from me any longer) that today at Longchamps the horses will contest, straining their utmost, forgetful of everything. It is the last day. The leaves are falling. After this, one must wait until spring to see again the broad, green field, surrounded by hills. It is fair weather, a little smoke, the Eiffel tower, a balloon may be seen.

Everything is ready for the races. Already gay colours, greens, yellows set off by the orange foliage, may be distinguished in the crowd. The jockeys climb upon their colts which throw their legs like sparks in all directions. They start off, heads lowered, faces set. They gallop on the grass. They pass the windmill, smelling the fragrance of leaves and turf. I open the window. My neighbor has started the gramophone and the refrain recurs like an old woman telling her beads.

The window is open. The weather is mild. The leaves fall, fall slowly. There is no way to stop them.

At such a time, memories float softly in the air, like the long inexorable cobwebs called "sons of the virgin." It seemed to me that my glances were mingled in the distance. There was an immense green field. God! If only the rest were a matter of indifference to me. There was a crowd which came and went, a red disk on a post, numbers, names which passed from mouth to mouth, money passed from hand to hand. My head turned, I was lost, I could not place myself, and I heard a tumult, ferocious and gay like a big celebration.

The sun was sinking. I sat there by my window and the hours had stopped. The rain had ceased and the mild air let the fragrance run freely. I heard a murmur.

Then a cry, a cry I shall remember. Sunday, and the silence of today, before a closed door and by the window-

pane the rain struck regularly. With hands open and my eyes closed, I sit down in the armchair, close to the window. These hours will pass with these phantoms, faces I still wish to keep out of my mind.

Still, I wait for them, today as on other days. It seems to me that I should be desolate if they were to vanish forever, I write only to pursue more closely my thoughts, which drift and unravel. I write because I do not suffer enough, because my pen, perhaps, will attack the core of my suffering.

Sunday. The big day at Longchamps. The brother of days I have lived.

I am grateful to those who have found this refuge for me, who have kept me from harm and have obliged me to whet my suffering to a keen edge.

The ennui which, riding the hours of the afternoon, would force my doorway, I do not fear. Here I am alone for the first time in so many years. And for how long? It is not ennui I fear but that sort of dizziness called terror. I imagine that in this solitude, this great and empty space, all the phantoms I have known, even those I have merely perceived, will penetrate the walls, all at once, and parade before me.

I know well that my mind, in the habit always of considering uniquely the future, of neglecting even the present, is likely to run backward, like the movement of a crazy watch, and unroll the long band upon which the past is inscribed.

The evening which is about to come will subdue all noises which still could distract me and the night, far ahead of sleep, will install itself for hours in this room. Already I look at the bed; already I dream of silence. Everyone has stopped moving, as if a bell I had not heard had signalled for silence and immobility.

I dreamed I was alive. That surprised me. I was alive. But I woke myself up.

Translated from the French
by Elliot Paul.

WINTER

By CHARLES SYLVESTRE

Winter had laid its stranglehold on the countryside of Haut Limousin. By the paths long trails of bramble lay stark and frozen, and caught in the forks of trees were clots of snow suggestive of weird white birds. It was a scene of complete desolation, and in the great silence the occasional whir of wings vibrated long and strangely. The intense cold, like a thousand knives, cut down all vegetation on land already bare and wasted. The leaden grey sky hung low over the sombre landscape. Icicles appeared on the banks like pale curious fruit, and under its crystal film the foliage seemed alive. But the sun did not shine, though here and there solitary oaks stretched out yearning branches. Sometimes a gust of wind carried with it to the hamlet of Ballanges the sharp sound of crackling ice as it broke under some heavy tread; the river near by had altogether ceased its murmur.

By the side of a road, marked with the frozen imprint of the hoofs of oxen and wagon wheels, a few low cottages with their hay-lofts and hen-houses clustered together. They had an air of expectation, peeping through their dilapidated shutters, as though waiting for something that never came. At a little distance in a field, near a gnarled and twisted apple-tree, stood a wretched dwelling. It was ill-lighted by one small high window, and the door opened on to a rough flat stone which had been flung there to do duty as a step. In the yard at the back, a solitary black hen had taken refuge near to a pile of fagots under the shed. She was standing on one leg, the other tucked into her plumage, and only the gleam of a yellow eye near her empurpled comb showed that she was alive.

A sinewy yellow cat ran out from the cottage and hid himself under a bush, where he crouched watching a robin

as he hopped from bough to bough, his eyes like two points of green flame. Near the broken-down well-head, a ladder had fallen and lay frozen into the mud. It was near mid-day but all lay still and rigid in the grip of the frost which seemed to have taken all life, even out of the day itself.

La mère Bordier came and stood on the threshold, shading her eyes with her hand, in her habitual gesture, as she gazed outside. Then she reëntered, beginning to whimper, quietly at first and then with heart-breaking sobs. She seated herself close to the chimney-corner where two logs smouldered, pressing her clenched fists against her fallen mouth, and muttered to herself:

"What can I do? Oh, what can I do? . . ."

She rubbed her red-rimmed eyes with work-worn fingers.

"I am old, old enough to die, and my strength has gone. . . . I can't do anything more. The boy in Paris sends us nothing now. . . . We are forgotten and deserted. . . . It's like being dead. Oh, dear, Oh dearie me! . . ."

She sat on, leaning over the thin flame, murmuring her complaints, going over her hard life and weeping softly tears of self pity.

She roused herself suddenly; Bordier, his face blue with cold under its old night-cap, was sitting up on his pallet-bed shouting and singing the words of an old popular song. For two nights and days he had lain there burning with fever and breathing with great difficulty. And though Nanette Bordier had cared for him lovingly, giving him concoctions of herbs known only to herself, the malady did not yield; and he lay with burning eyes in a face ravaged by age and weather.

She fell at the foot of the bed, and in a coaxing voice of one speaking to a child she asked:

"What's the matter, my poor dear? It's a touch of fever —these hot and cold shivers, I think. It feels bad now, but it will soon be better. . . . What would you like?"

"I want to drink a pint. . . ."

"You've drunk enough to float a ship already."

He tore open the neck of his shirt, exposing a tuft of grey

hair, and sat breathing with difficulty. Then he shouted:

"Go and get me a pint of wine and some lozenges and a loaf of bread! Go, go . . . if you don't it will be you who's killed me!"

Nanette ceased her muttering and grumbling. She looked round the one room dwelling, in one corner of which stood a dilapidated chest covered with empty bottles and a few cracked pots. Then she opened a cupboard in the vain hope that one of the old fairy stories would come true and by some magic she would find herself the possessor of a purse-ful of money; but the two pieces of five sous she found there did not transform themselves into gold. Her lips trembled and her eyes filled with tears again. She fixed her bonnet on her scanty grey hair, a few wisps of which escaped on each side, and approaching the old man in the bed, she said gently:

"It's all right, you shall have your pint and the lozenges. Keep quiet here, and be patient; I am going to fetch them."

He nodded approval and closed his eyes.

She drew the embers together, blowing underneath them as she knelt down on the hearthstone. On the chimney-piece above a Crucifix carved out of the bone of an ox raised its arms to the smoke-stained ceiling by the aid of an iron candlestick.

Nanette, throwing a woollen shawl over her shoulders, went out into the courtyard. Outside the winter air seemed less frigid than the penetrating cold of the cottage. Standing with her hands on her hips, she asked herself:

"What can I do? I have no money and he must have some lozenges. Some lozenges would cure him. . . ."

Her eyes rested on the hen in the shelter of the shed; it was her last, for she had had to sell the others, not having enough to feed them on. She went back into the house and returned with a few crumbs which she threw to the hen, calling it. As she was about to seize it by the neck she stumbled and grazed her hands. After rubbing a little frozen earth into the abrasures she continued her pursuit of the

hen, which finally flew into the hen-house. Here she was able to catch it, and after tying its legs together she set out with it in her hand for Rieux.

"I shall be able to sell it all right," she muttered to herself as she walked.

Rieux was five miles from Ballanges, and as Nanette picked her way through the thickets, through which twisted the narrow path, the black hen moved convulsively from time to time lifting her head, when the bright eye gleamed stupidly. The north wind rustled in the tarnished green of the fields, and when she came to the bridge spanning the river, she found it frozen at both edges. All was frost-bound; only a crow flew low across her path.

Nanette proceeded, holding up a corner of her shawl with one hand against her mouth, as a protection against the biting wind, and with the other holding firmly the black hen which had become stupefied. Before long she had reached the outskirts of Rieux. She stopped at the first house and knocked at the door, through the glass of which she could see a wood fire burning in the dim interior.

"What do you want, Mother Bordier?" asked Mme. Dufaud, a big stout woman with a shiny skin.

"It's this hen. . . . She's a fine one, but I can't look after her any longer. Will you take her for ten francs?"

Mme. Dufaud raised her hand in a gesture of astonishment.

"What are you thinking about? A hen like that. . . . Why, it's only good enough to put in the pot . . . and I still have four left, one for Palm Sunday, one for Easter, one for my man's birthday and one for the feast of *Les deux Dames*. Is it laying?"

And she felt carefully with her first finger.

"Oh, she isn't even laying, and not fat either! It's a pity!"

She continued talking rapidly for some time, then, without heeding the old woman's face which had turned ashy white, she shut the door crying:

"Oh, no . . . don't stand there, nor me either . . . or I'll catch my death of cold."

Nanette continued along her way, half running. She

was muttering to herself as though to rally her courage:

"I must get back before night . . . must get back. . . ."

The little town of Rieux showed as a cluster of roofs grouped round a squatty church tower, surmounted by an iron weather-vane blackened by the rains.

Nanette entered the alley known as the main street. There she saw Jantaud, the sabot-maker, at work in his little shanty where he was busy hollowing the alder wood he used for his shoes. Nanette hastened her step, then turning suddenly towards Jantaud, she whined:

"Can you use this hen? It is not dear. I can't feed it any longer."

Without stopping his work for a moment Jantaud replied gruffly:

"It's no good to me. I eat more beans than fowls. So your old man's eaten everything, has he? And drunk everything too? He was a good fellow, but a thirsty fish."

As he spoke his small sharp eyes took in the old woman's tattered cloak. He was a dried-up withered little figure, and his arms bare to the elbow were like a bunch of cords covered with leather.

She tried in vain to speak, lifted her hand impotently and drifted away. Arriving at the church, she sat down for a moment on the priest's doorstep. Presently she plucked up courage to raise the heavy iron knocker; at the sound the priest appeared.

"Oh, it's you, Mother Bordier, come in. . . ."

She walked into a large tiled kitchen. In the wide chimney a bright fire was burning, but she was so weak that she could not bear to look at the flames.

"It's this hen, Monsieur le Curé, I want to sell it. Bordier is ill and he wants some lozenges and wine."

The abbé, clad in a quilted dressing-gown which made him look like a vast animated cushion, put his hand in his pocket and drew out two new pieces of five-sous.

"That's all I can do, my poor soul. We hardly ever treat ourselves to a fowl, even for the pot. . . . I have my store of potatoes, for which I thank God."

From the dresser he took a flask of black currant brandy, which he poured out into a small glass.

"There, drink that. . . . It will warm you. I'm afraid you have got a chill."

Nanette swallowed the contents of the glass at a gulp, and then she began to laugh wildly for she had eaten nothing but a bit of bread all day, and the stuff went to her head. She wanted to cry, to throw herself on the tiled floor and weep over her misery, instead of which she passed out murmuring her thanks.

Once more in the street, she hastened towards the house of Jacquet, the mayor. He was well-off, the possessor of tilled fields and grass-land and woods of oak and chestnut. She found him by the fire, a small sandy-haired man whose cold blue eyes had sought for nothing but profit for many a year. When he saw Nanette enter he gave a scornful sniff, and before she could speak, he cried:

"You want to give me that fowl, well—keep it. I've got more than I know what to do with. But listen to me. You and your husband ought to be in the work-house. The work-house at Bellac is a fine place where everything runs on oiled wheels. You would be well looked after there. If I'd nothing to live on I'd be glad to go there. . . . Oh, yes, you can look at me like that. . . . You are a pair of obstinate old fools."

Nanette, who was about to speak, was overcome by such an outburst of anger that she turned her back on Jacquet and hurried away, muttering her contempt as she crossed the threshold, before he even had time to offer her two sous, which he put back in his pocket without regret.

Night was drawing near and the ashen sky was darkened. Nanette stood hesitating in a lane near by.

"I've got to find some money," she groaned.

The black hen hung limply from her hand, stiff with cold. She felt like bursting out crying, and in order not to she stuffed the woollen shawl hard up against her mouth.

Then, a bit more calm, she returned to the main street where people were going up and down, buying their supplies. Near the market-place stood the house of Jacques Vantaud,

a tradesman. She pushed open the gateway and entered the courtyard. Suddenly she cried shrilly:

"Help, help, monsieur!"

The bitter wind had been too much for her, and every now and again her whole body trembled violently. The main door opened, and Jacques Vantaud, seizing Nanette by the arm, helped her into the vestibule. He made her sit down by the fire, but she continued to tremble convulsively, like a bird stricken by the cold; she still clutched the black hen, and Jacques Vantaud was staring at her, astounded by the extraordinary apparition. She raised her eyes and felt that perhaps she was saved. She attracted his attention to her face which was transfigured by a strange inner light.

"I came to sell this hen. . . ."

Jacques Vantaud put out his hand to touch the black fowl and found that it was dead, stiff with cold.

At this the old woman was so distressed that she fell on her knees beseeching Jacques Vantaud to believe that when she left Ballanges it was alive and well. Never would she have tried to sell him a dead hen.

She let the bird slip from her fingers on to the hearth, as she groaned:

"Yes, it's true enough, she's quite dead. . . . I was going to sell her to make money to buy some lozenges and bread and wine for Bordier, who is ill in bed."

Jacques Vantaud went to look for a 20 franc note, which he gave her. He wanted to talk to her but he could only look at her with deepest sympathy. Gently he pushed her towards the door, saying:

"Send me news how Bordier gets on. . . ."

She hurried along the main street of Rieux, where she bought some lozenges, a crisp golden-brown loaf and a bottle of wine. Suddenly all her sadness disappeared, and she wept for joy, like a child who has not yet set foot in the hard uncompromising world.

She took the path that climbed towards Ballanges, the wine, the lozenges and the loaf all safe in a fold of her cape, and she no longer felt the keen biting wind. Hidden behind a

bank of clouds the moon was rising like a huge white disc.

Nanette walked quickly, leaning on the stick she had cut from a chestnut tree. She seemed walking on air, nothing had any substance or reality, and as she neared Ballanges her only desire was to sleep. She crossed the river by the bridge, and down in the valley the juniper-trees looked like hooded dwarfs in the dusk, awaiting the coming of the fairies on the stroke of midnight.

The trees stretching out of sight seemed to carry some strange burden. Ballanges was quite near now. Somewhere a lamp threw out a flickering yellow light, and a dog was barking. Suddenly the moon pierced through the veil of clouds disclosing all the marvellous glittering beauties of the frozen landscape. The dog barked again, and then began to howl as the moon was lost in a white bank of mist.

As Nanette opened the gate, she called:

"I'm coming, Bordier, just another minute!"

She raised the catch of the door and saw that the fire had gone out. She went at once to the bed.

"I've got some bread and wine and the lozenges. . . ."

The room was in darkness, for the light could not penetrate through the dusty panes of the one little window.

"Bordier, answer me. . . . I've got all you want, and soon you will be better. Now I'm going to light the fire."

He must be asleep, she thought. Better not to wake him. She struck a match and pushed a few twigs under the dead logs. Then she knelt down, and with her hands in the ashes, blew up the embers. She got up and approached the bed, drawing back the curtains. She uttered a stuporous cry,—the bed was empty. She stood rooted to the spot, a great dread tightening the muscles of her throat. She could hear nothing but the blood drumming in her ears, and she dared not look behind her lest someone was watching her ready to burst into derisive laughter. Without moving, she called:

"Bordier, where are you? Are you playing a trick on me? Are you making fun of your old woman?"

At last she found the strength to move; she lit a lantern and searched all over the room, where the chill clammy

air seemed much colder than the frost outside. She herself turned icy cold. She opened the door and, in the rays of the lantern, she saw near the broken-down well-head the body of her man with arms outstretched, his head bent down towards the hidden water.

GO AWAY, MY YOUTH

By BINET-VALMER

The old man said:

"Such is life."

And the little girl did not understand.

He was very old, this old man; and this little girl was very young indeed. People, sentiments and things were without measure in this house.

"I'm frightened, Grandpa."

"Go to bed, Nane. At your age, and at mine, if one cannot sleep, one is frightened."

"I want Maman."

"I, also, formerly, used to call my maman."

"Where is your maman?"

"You know very well where she is. Near the church."

"And mine?"

"She will come back. You will see her again."

"I want Maman. I am frightened."

There was the ocean, with its terrific noise, on the other side of the dunes. In the peaceful lake the full moon was reflected. It was at Hosségor, in the Landes and the pine woods. Each tree trunk had its wound, and the rosin ran, drop by drop, to enrich the pitiless.

"Such is life," repeated the septenarian.

Then the servant entered, carrying the lamp, as the storm of the day before had broken the electric current.

"I want Maman," begged the little girl.

And the servant hastened to flee from this grief.

The lamp lighted the table in the middle of the big salon. But around the table there were shadows.

"Let us look at this beautiful picture book," proposed the grandfather.

The little girl was interested.

They turned the pages, a few pages. The white head and the faded face, with wrinkles which were more accentuated as the face was clean-shaven, touched the curls that as yet were not very pretty, having that pale, undecided colour of early childhood, and the nice little face where the traces of tears dried by soiled hands had left streaks under the blue eyes.

"That doesn't amuse me," said Nane, pushing away the book. "Why did they go away?"

"They went for a drive, my child."

"Maman never drives in the evening, and Papa and Uncle Etienne were talking very loud yelling in front of the house."

"They were having a discussion. Men always speak loud when they are discussing."

"You are sure, Grandpa, that they will come back?"

"Your Maman will be here tomorrow, I am convinced of it."

"Not before tomorrow? Then you will tuck me in my bed?"

Then the servant returned.

"Nane really must go to bed," she said. "She has to take her bath and eat her dinner, and it is late for her to be up."

"I don't want to take a bath, I don't want any dinner, Maria. Maman is coming back tomorrow, and I want to go to sleep, so that tomorrow will come quicker."

"Are you sleepy?" asked her grandfather.

"Yes," said the little girl. "I have been crying."

"Poor dear!" sighed Maria.

She had been four times a "wet" nurse, and the dimensions of her breasts were, also, measureless.

"Take her along and put her to bed," ordered the old man, who seemed greater than nature, although he held his head low. "I will tuck her in."

Then, when he was alone, he went to the window, opened it, listened to the ocean and stared meditatively at the lake. There, on the other side of the dunes, the tumult of waves; here, the lonely mirror. The tumult was more worth while. During the entire drama, Monsieur Lebreton (yes, he descended from the fishermen who gave their name to Cap

Breton, which is just next to Hosségor), during the entire drama that he had suspected before taking a part in it, had felt less abandoned, less tortured than he felt at present. And yet his two sons had fought for the same woman,—it was frightful. The day before, and even that afternoon, he thought that he had lived too long to have to witness that, and it was he who was the cause of their flight away from the dishonoured house.

Jean Paul Lebreton had married twice: at thirty years and at forty-five years old. Each wife had given him one son: Jean Frederic, then Jean Etienne. Jean Frederic, the eldest, had passed his whole life, except during the war, running about the world, earning money. In Canada he had met the one who had just dishonoured the house. And he had waited until she was a widow, waited for years and years. Then, after the war, their marriage, and the birth of Nane. It was scarcely two months since Jean Paul Lebreton had made the acquaintance of his daughter-in-law and of his grandchild. As to Jean Etienne, the youngest, he was the consolation of his old age, a handsome youth who had volunteered at eighteen, but too late to fight. And he also had dishonoured the house.

Then Maria the servant made her third entrance.

"You must come, Monsieur. The poor dear wants you to tuck her in."

"I am coming," said Monsieur Lebreton, "but I am surprised that the carriage that drove away her mother has not yet returned."

It was a carriage drawn by an old horse that had driven away Jacqueline, or rather, "Jack," while Jean Frederic and Jean Etienne had each taken an automobile that they drove themselves.

"I'm not worried," said Maria. "A mother always returns. Before the carriage gets to the station, Madame Jacqueline will change her mind."

"I pray to God that you are right," said Monsieur Lebreton. And he went to the room where Nane was waiting.

She was tiny, in her little bed. Maria had washed her hands and face, and the tears that were again flowing down her cheeks were pure and white. She stretched out her arms to the old man.

"I was afraid that you had gone, too!"

He bent over her, as only those who are near death know how to bend over those who are just beginning to live. He would have liked to say to her: "It is my fault. I was too violent, I will bring her back to you." But he was only able to murmur:

"I swear that she will come back."

And he arranged the bedclothes with an infinite tenderness.

Maria, who had been four times a "wet" nurse, looked at him and wanted to cry. Nevertheless, she disapproved of all that had been going on in the house. At first it had taken her some time to understand that "Madame Jacqueline" was not "that Américaine," but a Frenchwoman whose family had formerly emigrated to Canada. Then life had become complicated. Even if Monsieur Jean Etienne, although much younger, did look like Monsieur Jean Frederic, resembled him in such an extraordinary way, that was not a reason for Madame Jacqueline to smile at her brother-in-law, and caress him in front of everybody, as if she were smiling at and caressing her husband. The servant had foreseen that it would end badly, but the fury of Monsieur Lebreton, her master, had terrified her more than the scene between the two brothers, when they took each other by the throat. Monsieur Lebreton had suddenly intervened, he had placed his wrinkled, muscular old hands on the necks of the two maddened men, and he, that old man, had pushed aside the man that was still young, and the young man. "Shame!" cried he, "Shame!" Madame Jacqueline implored: "It is not true!" said she. But he repeated: "Shame! Shame!" and Maria, frightened to death, and who believed that "it was true," felt her heavy nurse's breasts tremble, at the thought that Nane might at that moment leave the garden where

she was playing, enter the house, go upstairs slowly, singing, as she was apt to do, and hear these shouts.

The whole scene had taken place in the hall, on the first floor, on the threshold of Madame Jacqueline's room. And Maria was obliged to prepare the dinner, to return to the kitchen without knowing what was going to happen. The kitchen was far away from the hall, and opened on to the garden. Maria had seen Nane, the "poor dear," making splendid designs on the grass with flower petals. Then . . . well, no one ate dinner! Monsieur Jean Frederic had taken his automobile out of the garage. Monsieur Jean Etienne had joined his brother, and he, also, had taken his car out of the garage, then they insulted each other again. But Nane had already left the lawn and the fine designs traced on the grass by the petals. She was surely looking for her mother in order to show them to her. But Maria did not know what had happened in the salon. Madame Jacqueline had called out: "Tell the cabman that I want him immediately." They had all left, although Monsieur Lebreton had tried to hold back his daughter-in-law, who answered him in a low voice: "No, no, not a minute longer! After what you have said to me!" All had gone.

And now, so that Nane could go gently to sleep, Maria chanted the *Lullaby of the Pines,* that lullaby of the great poet of the Landes, Loys Labèque:

When the pines sing,—
Do you sleep, my child?
When the pines sing,
They will rock you.

When you sleep,—
Do you sleep, my child?
When you sleep,
I'll pray for you.

And the lovely angels,—
Do you sleep, my child?
The lovely angels will come,
And dance on your forehead.

Nane hummed, nearly asleep:

"They will come back, they will come back."

And the little girl, ah, so little, closed her eyes and the grandfather murmured:

"When you sleep I'll pray for you."

They could pray: Nane slept.

In order to hear more clearly that noise of which the tumult of his old heart had such need, Monsieur Lebreton left the dishonoured house, and walked slowly, with short steps, near the placid lake, in which was reflected the enormous moon. The two phantoms of his life were by his side, the first and the second wife; the mother of Jean Frederic and the mother of Jean Etienne. He had loved one as much as the other. Dead for so long a time, they had never met except in his memory. They had never been jealous of each other. He took them as witnesses of his unhappiness, of the infamy of the sons that they had given him. They pleaded their cause; each pleaded for her own child, but both of them accused the coquette. They had no pity for her, but Monsieur Lebreton himself had so much pity for her. "Is she responsible?" he asked himself, separating the phantoms. Like Maria, he had foreseen that it would end badly. Jacqueline was as old as her husband, who had waited years for her; she was no longer very young, and naturally tried to prove to herself that she was still seductive. "But her own brother-in-law," said the phantom of the first wife. The phantom of the second wife answered: "She had been your son's mistress before he married her, I am sure. He should have paid more attention. My son is charming. Yours . . ." The old man did not permit them to quarrel any more, he chased them away, and remained alone on the banks of the placid lake, saying to himself:

"I should not have been so violent."

Over there, behind the dune, the ebbing tide carried off the sonority of the waves.

Suddenly a whip cracked. The cabman kept up this elegant habit. With short, quick steps, his heart beating, Monsieur

Lebreton moved toward the noise, and from the carriage that had been used for so many marriages, stepped the woman, perhaps adulteress, Jacqueline, Jacquot, Jack.

"It is I," said she.

And the cabman explained:

"We missed the train."

A small shadow before the house, rendered whiter by the rays of the moon, the shadow of Jacqueline, of Jacquot, of Jack. . . .

"We missed the train, I am sorry."

"I am very glad that you missed it," said Monsieur Lebreton.

The tide was making the sound of the ocean more indistinct.

The old man stood in front of the narrow shadow of a woman.

"I was expecting you," he admitted.

"Nane?" she asked.

"She is asleep."

"The others?"

"They have not returned."

"Oh, how difficult life is, Father."

But the cabman cracked his whip. The ocean was over there, and the moon was reflected in the lake.

"Alas!" said Monsieur Lebreton. "I know."

Jack entered the large salon, and took off her coat. She was small, so small and fragile that one was afraid to approach her, small without measure.

Monsieur Lebreton had never seen her as he saw her now: as fragile as a Venetian glass. He had nearly broken this deceptive and limpid crystal.

"Why, Jacqueline?"

"The men."

Maria crossed the salon.

"Ah! Madame has returned."

Monsieur Lebreton ordered her to be silent, with a movement of his head.

"I did not miss the train," said Jacqueline when the servant had left.

"You did not miss the train? Another lie!"

"The cabman lied to you, Father. I am telling the truth."

The lamp was standing in the middle of the salon, and all around the lamp and the table were shadows.

"They are at the angle of the forest, in a secluded corner, Father. I do not know which one joined the other. When I saw the two cars stopped there, I gave the order to the cabman to return and I gave him money to lie to you."

"They are at the angle of the forest, in a secluded corner?"

"Yes," said Jack. "I am frightened."

They were at the angle of the forest, at a secluded corner. Destiny alone was to blame. Automobiles often stop without any one ever knowing why their souls are silent. Carburetor? Dynamo? The soul that brought one so far has no more force, it makes a noise but does not advance. The soul of Jean Frederic had stopped at the angle of the forest at a secluded corner, and the soul of Jean Etienne had stopped also: and Jacqueline had seen the two cars, their two souls stopped. Then she paid the cabman to return.

One cannot escape life easily. Even explosive motors cannot deliver one from his past. Much better off was the cabman who was paid not to go any further, and who returned home. The horse was joyous, sniffing the stable. Automobiles cannot sniff garages, they are too complicated.

Jean Paul Lebreton's two sons stood opposite each other, because their souls, being too complicated, would not carry them further.

"I have a break down," said Jean Frederic, not suspecting that his brother was in the same plight.

"Do you want me to help you?" proposed Jean Etienne, timidly. (They were huge men, but had feeble hearts, and the woman was no longer there.) "I have a break down, too."

Simple coincidence? Don't you believe that God's great book and the gods themselves are not all dulled? Things do happen, at times . . .

"I've found it," said Jean Etienne. "Your magneto is out of order."

And when they had arranged it, the motor turned, ready to carry away with its soul the soul of Jean Frederic.

From afar one could hear the wail of the ocean.

"I am also having trouble with my motor," said Jean Etienne. "Will you help me, as I helped you?"

Jean Frederic consented, silently.

Soon the two souls were humming. The two brothers could have separated. They did not dare, and as the soul of one and the soul of the other were tumultuous, both forgot the sound of the ocean. The woman was no longer there.

"Why did you treat me like that?" said Jean Frederic to his younger brother.

"What have I done? Old man, think of our father!"

"Boy, do you realize that I also am a father?"

"You are the only one she has ever loved, Frederic."

"When she loved me, Etienne, I was like you."

"I swear to you, Frederic! . . ."

There was a youthful freshness in Jean Etienne's voice. Formerly Jean Frederic's voice had the same freshness. But now the answer of the older brother was harsh:

"What were you doing in my wife's room?"

"Jacqueline was at her door when I was passing in the hall."

"The door was closed when I surprised you."

"But you did not surprise us. I tell you, Frederic, your suspicions are running away with you."

"She had an expression on her face that I no longer see, the expression she wore when I was with her, years ago."

"Am I responsible for the changes in her face?"

"No, you are not responsible for your youth."

"Nor for the likeness that our father's blood has imposed on us, Frederic."

"Nor for that likeness, of which she has spoken too often."

"The first time that she spoke of it you ought to have taken her far away from me."

"Ah! You admit it!"

And then again heard the sound of the ocean, in spite of the tumult in their hearts.

"I admit that our likeness made her think of your love for each other."

"Our out-of-date love!"

"Your long years of love that she has not forgotten. I swear that she has not forgotten. Nane is the proof."

"Why did you jump back, Etienne, when I opened the door?"

"I was afraid of your absurd jealousy. Can one be jealous of oneself?"

"One can certainly be jealous of what one has been, brother. One would like to kill that in order to live. It is that that bars your way, takes your mistresses, makes you. . . ."

"Do pity me!" implored Jean Etienne.

But in this forest of the Landes, in spite of the protection of the dunes, there is no pity, since the trees, the pines exposed to the storms, bleed from the wounds men inflict without *pity* on their trunks. The sap runs, drop by drop. The leaves suffer less from the tempests.

"My boy, swear to me that she has never been . . ."

"I swear it!"

"That she has never . . ."

"I swear it!"

"You swear badly. She has kissed you?"

"In front of you, like a sister."

"She was not kissing you in the room, when I entered?"

"She was not kissing me."

"It was I, no doubt, that she was kissing in your arms? It was I who had mussed up her hair?"

"Kill your youth, brother. I shall not defend myself. Take the "Browning" out of the pocket of the automobile. It will be quite evidently a suicide, and you can go in search of your future."

"And why shouldn't I?" said Jean Frederic. "You were born and have lived in the midst of gayety. As for me, I have worked and suffered. Why do you steal the place that I acquired with such difficulty?"

"Take the Browning and kill your youth."

"I am not so stupid as that! I will let you grow old near one another, you slowly, she very quickly. And I will take away my child, my youth of tomorrow."

"And our father, Frederic?"

"He is a man who has lived too long. Two wives died in his bed, and he does not fear death, even if he does adore life. As for me, I do not love it enough."

"You keep talking about yourself, you repeat 'I' all the time. There is no one on earth but you, your youth of yesterday, your youth of tomorrow. Your past, present and future. You, you, you!"

From the distant ocean came the tempest. It met the sand, leaped over the barrier of the dunes. The sky remained pure, the lake of Hosségor placid, but the heroic pines had their hearts torn out, groaning in all their leafy height. And drop by drop, flowed the sap.

"Yes, I!" said Jean Frederic. "Rest easy, my boy, I will not kill you, I will wait. You must grow a bit older, you must begin to love a little, to remember all that you would have done for yourself, and perhaps, for a woman. It takes time to build up the one that one loves beyond everything, oneself."

They were like the martyred pines of the forest: the leafy tops in full squall, their hearts permitting sap to flow, drop by drop. Near by the automobiles were humming. For intelligence is absolutely indifferent to passion and becomes nervous only if the soul presses on the accelerator.

"I love your wife, Frederic. I swear that I have respected her. I shall love myself later."

"Is it really you talking? It is really me listening? What sublime simplicity. When I did not love myself, and now, when you do not love yourself yet, those are the only years of happiness, years of sacrifice. I believe that you have re-

spected her, I remember that I would have, myself. And so I no longer hate you."

"But I hate you."

"On account of Nane?"

"Take the 'Browning' in my car and kill the enemy of your former happiness."

"On account of Nane, you hate me?"

"I wanted to run away."

"Run away, my boy. One must construct and not overthrow. I, I, I, I have pardoned you."

"All this drama, that horror, those cries, just to get as far as that?"

"Even the ocean storms get as far as that, my boy. They ought to break up everything, but they grow quiet. In one, two or three days, they go from your youth to the age of our father. Between those two extremes there is the surge. Go away, go away, quickly, because the surge is still in my heart."

"I was kissing your wife when you came in the room."

"Be still! Go away! I tell you to go! I am returning."

"I cannot, where would I go?"

"To find yourself."

"I love her."

"Deserve the one that you love."

"And if I admitted to you . . ."

"I forbid you! When our father drove us from the house he repeated: 'Shame!, shame!' You must go, my boy. I will return for Nane's sake, and perhaps, for the sake of our father. Go away, my youth! Go away, there are other women."

"Don't you remember your youth any longer, Frederic?"

"Are you jealous? I remember my youth."

"And you are able to forgive?"

"The heart runs drop by drop, brother. When you will have received your wound, the true one, tempests can shake you, you will groan like the forest around us, but your heart running drop by drop, you will suffer only from your heart."

"From my selfish heart?"

"From your heart which will have given all that it can."

"Frederic, I lied to you."

"Keep on. I fear nothing but the truth."

"And you are wrong! I am going to leave, to obey you, and do not know when we will see each other again. I swear that I have never even kissed her. She never stopped talking of you, of what you were to her, of our likeness. She found you again when she took my hand, and my hand grew like ice. Your wife whom I loved, I love, put your memory between us. Do you understand, old man? I never even kissed her, because I did not want her to kiss me in memory of your love."

"Go away, boy. Off with you. Find a woman whose memory you will be. Before leaving, kiss me, my youth!"

And Jacqueline, Jacquot, Jack, little woman without measure, repeated in the big salon:

"I am afraid, Father."

"Shame, shame," grumbled the old man.

But here was the storm from the sea bounding over the dunes, reaching the summit of the wounded pines, making the weathercocks groan on the roof of the house. And Monsieur Lebreton and his daughter-in-law also heard the heavy steps of the servant with the enormous breasts. Maria hurried, she had to close the windows. God grant that Nane, "poor dear," did not wake up.

"You returned because you were afraid?" asked the one who was too accustomed to storms to pay attention to them.

"I came to get your help."

"Then the truth, I want the truth! Why were you shut up in your room with my son Etienne?"

"We were not shut in. Frederic did not have to break in the door."

"Why was the door closed?"

"They are over there, Father, and may kill each other."

"Well! What do you want me to do? Are you not the one to separate them?"

"If they had seen me, their hate would have grown fiercer; but they respect you."

"They dishonoured my house, one by his desire, the other by his jealousy. They did not respect me."

"I am alone to blame, and you told me that you were glad that I came back, and you know . . ."

"I no longer know. When I drove you away. . . ."

"Without even listening to my defense!"

"I was sorry for your daughter, that poor little girl whom you should have taken at all cost when you left. I replaced you when she went to sleep, and while she was falling asleep, I grew quiet. And then, you have come back . . . You are not strong, I am afraid to hurt you, and cannot believe that you could do wrong."

"What is the use of talking, Father? I implore you to do something!"

"They were at the angle of the forest, in a secluded corner? The carriage brought you back at a horse's pace, it will take me back as slowly. *I* have no automobile!"

"Ah, you are like Frederic! I, I, I! I tell you that they are disputing."

"I? Yes, I! I have no other child than the little girl asleep up stairs."

"Father, I will confess: Frederic was right to be jealous. Etienne did not dishonour the house, nor did I. But I am to blame for having loved my youth too much,—and my husband's youth. A woman loves only one man in her life."

"Enough!" interrupted the old man. "Your first husband?"

"As unlikely as it appears, Frederic looked like him, my fiancé, when I first met him, the man I thought I would love all my life, who grew old very quickly. Frederic looked like my first husband as a youth, as Etienne resembles Frederic when he was young."

"And you would marry Etienne? In fifteen or twenty years?"

"Ah, do not mock me! I will be dead before that danger occurs!"

"One does not mock a storm like that. Listen to the ocean."

"It is my true story that I am telling you, Father, the whole truth. I am not a tragedy heroine. I have followed, as we all do, men and women, the face of my first love."

"And your daughter?"

"And your sons?"

"Silence!"

"If Jean Frederic and Jean Etienne look so much alike, the two women whom you married must have resembled each other?"

"They did look alike, but I forbid you to speak of them."

"Your sons have spoken of them. A man loves only one woman, Monsieur Lebreton, and you also have pursued the image of your first love."

"And you have not even an English accent!" groaned Monsieur Lebreton. "If you had, I would have tried to understand you, without seeking further, but you are one of us."

"Less secret," said she. "And bolder."

"You did not . . . with Etienne?"

"I did not. And I am assuming an English accent in answering you."

"And you accepted your husband's insults?"

"And I accepted yours, too, and I went away. I deserved the insults, yes, I deserved them, for the time comes when one should no longer run after the youth of love, and that moment came for me, on account of Nane, and also on account of the wrinkles that were beginning to come. There is the dramatic moment, even for the most ordinary little woman, that each one would like to protect. . . ."

But the old man interrupted her:

"Listen! One of them is coming back."

She listened attentively:

"It is Frederic," she said. "I recognize the sound of his motor."

The storm from the sea muffled the noise of the souls, and also the voice, perhaps a bit disappointed, of Jacqueline.

As if pushed by gusts of wind Jean Frederic entered the immense salon. He was a man between two ages, a man with

a rich past, a capitalist of life, of honor and fidelity, who wanted to receive all that was his due.

"It is I!" he said without violence, without malice, without tenderness.

"Your brother?" asked Monsieur Lebreton.

"Etienne has continued his journey. We have arranged everything, Father, between ourselves, as honest men."

And, approaching his wife, he held out a large, loyal hand:

"Forgive me!"

But the woman who was so little took her revenge:

"Later," said she, "when you will see in me only the mother of Nane, when you will no longer love me in such a detestable manner."

"Tell him what I mean," she continued to her father-in-law. "I am going up to kiss Nane."

She went away, fleeing, her heart in disorder, but Frederic tried to hold her back:

"I tell you that everything is all right, Jack, everything, between honest people. Let me go with you."

"Let us go with you," insisted the old man.

She neither permitted them to come, nor did she refuse, letting them follow her on the staircase, in the hall, in the room where the child was sleeping under the watchful care of Maria.

The storm of the sea and the human storm were both unable to prevent the blond angels from dancing on Nane's forehead, and the servant who had been four times a "wet" nurse, and who, on account of that, could see the blond angels, waved away the visitors with an imperious gesture.

And the grandfather, the father, and the mother of Nane beat a retreat, going down the staircase, entering the salon again.

"Kiss me, children," said Monsieur Lebreton, "and forget it all."

"I cannot, yet," said Jacqueline.

"She is right," murmured Frederic. "Not yet."

They had to grow old, not to love each other in the memory of their life definitely past, but in the future, the hopes

and dreams of the youth that they had created. It was necessary that each one of them could bend over Nane's bed and dare to say:

"Go away, my youth."

Then like the nurse, they would be able to see the beautiful angels of happiness, as they danced.

LE TRAIN BLEU

By COLETTE YVER

Ginette, the typist of the fifth floor, dressed in a cherry coloured slip showing her childish legs, and in a visored felt hat, entered the study of Monsieur H. of the Académie Goncourt, exhaling the double odour of a permanent wave and of the leather case pressed tight under her arm, in which lay the fruit of her labour.

"Monsieur," she began, as equal to equal, "I've brought your *Train Bleu*, with three carbon copies.

"Mademoiselle Ginette," said the novelist, conducting her to a chair, "you have not forgotten that verbs in the plural . . ."

"End with 's'? No, Monsieur," she interrupted, annoyed at this lack of confidence.

H. smiled. He was in his middle sixties, very "right bank," very Eighteenth, Eighteenth Arrondissement, expressing the Académie without a sword, pre-war days without worry, glory without fife and drums. His own period, which dated from the Dreyfus case, was a contemporary of Cyrano de Bergerac, hair piled high like helmets on the top of the head, standard lamps, first subway entrances, the first chivalrous Ministries and Radicals without chivalry. It began with the Fashoda incident, Zola's *Evangiles,* Clemenceau's *Aurore,* the Twilight of the Rose-Cross, the Russian hymn and the Hague Conference. He belonged to the epoch when little girls were called Olga, and big boys of twenty-five were still ignorant of artistic triumphs. He was greatly surprised when three thousand copies of his first novel were sold, hailed with articles of munificent, lavish criticism, before the days of the literary "Claque."

He followed a regular course in his career as an author, associating it with current historic events, greeting the ar-

rival of the new century, which came to this world like a Harlequin, born when it was in the most confused condition of ideas and facts; the anticlerical convulsions of its first years; the death of the naturalist school; the first symbols and the first Russian ballets; the first works of Péguy, and the first tendrils of psycho-analysis; the first aeroplanes; the first political tolerations; the first silence of Déroulède; at last the first World War.

H. had developed normally during these new and brilliant events, retaining, nevertheless, the charming pitch struck one day at the *Chat Noir,* when he was twenty, and the famous smile showing his beautiful teeth, featured in all the illustrated periodicals. He did not mind growing old because he had remained young. But since the opening of the new literary century, twelve years late on the calendar, like the Russian year, the fourteen letters of his celebrated name evaporated slowly, insensibly. A forward youth, forced in after-war hothouses, invaded the bookshops of today, and silently suppressed former glories with ferocious innocence. H. still published fine books, but they were posthumous, and the new generation was zealous in ignoring them.

Sad as it was to count only on his contemporaries, H. kept his charming smile, and instead of refusing the gifts of those who repulsed his own, fed, on the contrary, on this rapid and pulsating generation that he called the *Train Bleu,* adoring it without any grudge, even going as far as to dedicate it to this book, the fruit still green and fresh of his youthful sixties, and which Ginette had brought to him carefully typed in its new form.

The old author turned over the pages of his work; some lively passages registered cinematographic reflections on his face; then he said to his typist:

"Now, Mademoiselle Ginette, I have still a slight service to ask of you."

The rouged young mouth opened like a question mark.

"It is to sign the manuscript."

"It's already done, Monsieur."

"With my name, yes; but not with yours."

Her rouged mouth, her blue eyes, her slender nostrils, her whole anæmic little face of the Parisian typist grew round with surprise as she protested. A secretary would have believed that the master had become mad. Ginette instantaneously thought that he was in love with her, that her virtue was in danger, but that her fortune was made; that she could never love this old man, but was flattered by his choice; in short, all the usual thoughts of any typist in a similar situation. H. guessed her mistake, but he was far from dreaming of what she was thinking.

"My dear child," he said to her, "I have reasons for not signing my name to this novel. If you see no objection, you will tell everybody that you have written it, you will carry it yourself to the publishing house which has long served as a fold for my sheep, and you will say that the *Train Bleu* is the fruit of your own precocious genius. If these gentlemen should be astonished at the maturity of your talent and ask you how you were able to conceive this book, you will answer, as people like you have often done before, that it just happened without your knowing how. I beg of you to remember the following reply which you must use on every occasion, and which will easily satisfy your questioners: 'It came to me all by itself'; and never fear that they will push their curiosity further, as they will be too glad that you yourself shall have supplied an explanation for the prodigy, so adequate to the religion of Instinct and Ignorance."

"But," said Ginette, "I've only a grammar school certificate, and I'm not much good at conversation. They'd never believe. . . ."

"Don't you worry, Mademoiselle Ginette," answered the writer. "They will only say that there is an admirable digression between your personality and the demon that possesses you."

"Yes," said Ginette, "but I'm not anxious to have people say that I am possessed by a demon. That might hurt a girl's future."

"If you will believe me, my child, the demon in question will only act for your good. I will leave it to you. Of course,

I will give you the profit from this book. A contract will be made out in your name and you will guarantee, on *papier timbré,* to supply your publisher with other books which I will provide for you."

Ginette was the daughter of the butter and egg woman on the ground floor, who sold the best cheese in the rue Pigalle. She herself had installed her bustling industry on the fifth floor in her parents' Louis XV living room, but she also occupied herself with her mother's affairs. Then a sincere and limpid question came to her lips:

"If this book isn't going to bring you in either money or glory, Monsieur, why did you write it?"

H. considered Ginette, hesitating a moment as to whether he should confide in her that he did not altogether renounce glory, but that the only public that a true writer expects is himself; and that seeking deep into one's intentions one finds that he writes only in view of the final crown awarded by the ego. That today it was sufficient for him, therefore, by an experiment scientifically conducted, to analyze the ultimate vital realization of his success, and to learn if he was still breathing artificially, thanks to his unchanging reputation of former days, or by his own ability, which Ginette's false and absurd paternity would reveal. Of this final reaction would be born his conviction; and self praise, which alone is satisfying, could perhaps still bring forth unknown depths from within himself for himself.

But he preferred to answer Ginette thus:

"My dear child, at my age, one is fed up. I prefer to see the young girl that I admire so much profit by an insipid glory. . . ."

Ginette expected something else. She did not know just what. Nothing happened. She thought that it would be the proper thing to kiss the hand of the famous man who had overwhelmed her.

H. cried out in offended modesty:

"Oh! Don't thank me. . . ."

Perhaps you fear that H.'s secret was scarcely safe in that

light head, with its bushy hair, so full of other interests. Be not deceived. H. knew his Ginette. He knew what he was doing. He began by making her swear by the life of her little brother that she would never in this world unveil the mystery in which she was being initiated. Ginette, although without self control, was not the girl to perjure herself, although she longed from the very first to tell her mother, the butter and egg woman on the ground floor. And she began to read the *Train Bleu* with a delighted amazement,—for you must know that to type a novel is not the same thing as reading it. And she noticed that countless ideas in this love story were her own, especially the one that love is most precious when stolen from another's orchard. The *Train Bleu* was the story of six young girls and three big boys, mathematically causing tumultuous divisions, which were ceaselessly being undone. This novel had only nine characters; to balance it there should have been twelve. This very instability sounded the bell of youth, ever suffering, ever seeking its equilibrium, ever dashing after the assertion of its own individuality with the fury of a great express train. Ginette discovered a preference for things that do not run smoothly in love. Before the second evening had passed she recognized before the tribunal of her own judgment all the allegations contained in this book, and asked herself how it happened that the great author and herself thought in such parallel lines.

There was never any more question of confiding the secret to her family.

At the publisher's, received by an assistant secretary, Ginette had not been taken seriously, in spite of the assurance given her by the ownership of what she carried under her arm. In fact, although she really did not write the work, it belonged to her by the express wish of the author, by endowment, by substitution, by analogy, by hypothesis. She was not usurping an author's title, which was given to her by the author himself. In the same way, a reputed father has a legal authority over a child that he has not conceived. There was neither theft nor fraud. Ginette would without

scruple enjoy the satisfaction of passing for a genius in the eyes of the publishers. But on seeing her, she was only complimented on her extreme youth. And the manuscript handed over with such perfect defiance was put away on a shelf for months.

On an idle day someone opened it and read it.

The effect was immediate. The *Train Bleu* passed from hand to hand. They asked who had received Ginette and had with their own eyes seen this young prodigy?

"Twenty years old, most likely," described the assistant secretary.

These words brought increased interest and admiration.

"Ah!" said the principal reader. "Now I understand this sensation of freshness, of ingenuity, that I felt while reading these pages, and which could have come only from extreme youth."

They wanted to see Ginette immediately. They asked for her telephone number.

"The telephone!" exclaimed the assistant secretary. "When I tell you that she's only a poor little typist."

"Oh! Splendid! Splendid!" repeated the entire house.

Ginette on her second visit was fêted like a young Mozart, like an infant Michael Angelo. Each office was curious. The old head of the house received her solemnly, predicted a wonderful future, questioned her. Ginette, with true modesty, opened her painted little mouth, repeated for any one who cared to hear:

"I write all that quite naturally. It came to me without any trouble."

"My child," said the old man, "you will have to go on working hard, but we will make something out of you."

Later, when he saw H.:

"My dear friend, you have a penniless girl living in your own house who has produced a little work of art."

"Really?"

H. said nothing more, but he smiled. His strong lips opened, displaying his celebrated teeth. It was not irony, nor disillusion, nor spite, nor malice, but the great youthful

joy of success. It was the crude, new success that he had known at the age of twenty-five. It was the success of amazement, of surprise. He was discovered again. His ancient talent, become official, could still make a hit with the public, draw from it that cry heard but once, the day that it discovers you. H. said to himself:

"Thus I have had two débuts. . . ."

"And you, old man, when are you ever going to give us a novel? You've become awfully lazy."

"Oh! I," said H. "You know well that I am finished."

"Why, why, . . . but you always have a very respectable sale. . . ."

"But where on earth," said the butter and egg merchant to her daughter, when the *Train Bleu* appeared, "did you ever find all those ideas that you put in it?"

"Ah," said Ginette, who was beginning to modify her explanation. "I've had them in my head for a long time. For instance, when I was only sixteen I thought out the character of Monique."

She stopped before the bookshop windows and looked at the *Train Bleu* with a slight shiver. She had no longer the feeling of property but of possession. She even fancied she could see herself leaning over those white pages, writing those pathetic lines, about "Monique," "Angeline," and "Paul Henri's suicide."

Then the critics burst forth; there was a rush of literary chroniclers as to who would be the first to crown Ginette.

H. felt compelled to read all the newspapers. The critic of a morning sheet wrote:

"Mademoiselle, I will not quibble about your charming inexperience. If you had only been ten years older you would never have written that Monique . . . etc."

Another:

"Why reproach the author of the *Train Bleu* in this manner, this feminine sensibilty that, for example, in the death scene of 'Paul Henri' suggests an emotion in the style of Desbordes-Valmore? It is surely something that a girl of

twenty can write like a woman and make her mark in literature."

After these criticisms H. read the evening papers.

"This young girl possesses great and irrefutable gifts, and what is rare, knows her dictionary thoroughly. But good God! she should learn how to construct a novel, and should wait at least until she is of age before writing for publication, all about her youthful reveries; she needs a bit more of technique."

Ginette's portrait with her bushy hair, her round little mouth, her staring eyes, illustrated these articles. She could contemplate herself at leisure, where before she had envied the queens of mi-carême, prize winners in beauty contests or film favourites.

Sometimes at lunch she sat in front of an empty plate.

"Why aren't you eating?" said her mother.

"I feel ill," said Ginette. "I read a horrid criticism of my book today."

She read the *Train Bleu* again in the light of these criticisms. Offended by a sharp phrase, she cursed H., accusing him of having "ruined" her work. But when the word genius appeared in the articles, she smiled at her portrait as if it were a mirror, and recognized in it an inspired head.

A delegation of critics from the United States came to Paris. Their Parisian colleagues received them, and offered to show them the sights of the town. They asked to see the Chamber of Deputies, the Conciergerie and the author of the *Train Bleu,* in order to interview her.

One day seven people were ushered into the Henri II dining room where Ginette, clad in a pink dotted crêpe de chine, awaited them. There were two Parisian journalists, two critics from Chicago, two from Philadelphia, and the seventh came from Florida. They stared at the youngest writer in Europe through tortoise shell spectacles that shackle the eyes and keep them from wandering. Ginette took up a pretty pose, and it was the Americans who were intimidated. Each one possessed his written list and put her through a

series of questions. Ginette answered them tit for tat. The conversation was as follows:

Q.—What is your conception of the novel?

A.—A yellow cover with illustrations.

Q.—Who are your masters in literature?

A.—Victor Hugo and Gaston Leroux.

Q.—What do you think of neo-symbolism?

A.—Anything immoral disgusts me.

Q.—Are you a super-intellectual?

A.—My habits have always been good.

Q.—Your definition of Love?

A.—A lunch at the Val d'Or and a walk by moonlight.

Q.—Do you sometimes write verse?

A.—Yes, but never more than one at a time.

Q.—Are you a partizan of the autonomy of native literature, or of general inter-penetration?

A.—I've never been able to endure a black man.

These answers, made with the ingenious audacity that self satisfaction confers on women, aroused an admiration for the spirit of synthesis in the seven men gathered about Ginette. But the French journalists, above all, could scarcely contain their joy in finding this agnosticism in the little flower of the Parisian streets. The witty contrast of her mocking irony with the pedantry of the questionnaire thrilled them. And they invited the amusing child to lunch with them the following day.

"She is so intelligent," they said, going downstairs, "that all by herself she has found the art of arranging a whole system to an unforeseen formula."

A countless public was delighted with the *Train Bleu*. H. knew the best period of his literary life. He tasted glory as if it were an ice, pure, glacial, delicious; the essence of glory after synthetic success. Gone were the insipidity of compliments, the warm, artificial publicity of his name, the conventional sympathy of his readers. Alone in his study, he calculated all the new editions of his book brought out without interruption, and without profit to him. It was glory

stripped of money, and which for the first time he saw quite nude.

Ginette, however, left her fifth floor and bought a little apartment on the court, in the sixteenth Arrondissement, where she held receptions. H. was invited. He drank his tea and nibbled cakes on a cushioned divan in a tiny salon decorated with cubist hangings. Journalists and young novelists said to each other:

"What a great girl Ginette is!"

H. drew her to a corner and said:

"My child, you'll ruin me, with a house like this."

"But," said Ginette, "I have been engaged for a series of lectures in America. I'm going to earn a lot of money."

"What are you talking about?" stuttered the frightened writer.

"Don't worry. With a book like the *Train Bleu* I'm not lacking ideas."

"It's all right," thought H. "And I have nothing more to fear for my secret. What I foresaw has come to pass sooner than I should have thought, and Ginette has already become, in her own mind, the author of this book."

But he felt obliged to work like an ox, worried by Ginette's expenses, feeling a horrible responsibility for her. And he laughed as he said to himself that it was the first time that he ever killed himself for a woman.

On her return from America six months later Ginette said to him:

"I am going to get married. I am marrying a young business man."

She belonged to the period of pearl necklaces, forty horse power cars, a cinema life of rapid gains and hasty culture. H. hardly recognized her. She had acquired a steely look, a bit of an English accent, an air of having increased in value; she wrapped herself in gossamer scarves and made fun of the smallness of France.

"Mademoiselle Ginette, you've surely told your fiancé about the innocent fraud that we undertook together in connection with the *Train Bleu?*"

"Whatever are you thinking about, my dear Master?" said Ginette, prudently.

"My child, it is quite necessary. You cannot let the person you are going to marry believe . . . At any rate he will find it out sooner or later . . . he could make a scene when he discovers that I am passing over my manuscripts to you."

"But you will no longer pass them over, my dear Master."

"Perhaps," said H. a bit reassured, "your fiancé wishes you to give up your career as an authoress?"

"He is much too intelligent," said Ginette. "But in the future I shall write my own manuscripts. You have instilled the love of literature into my very soul. I have read a great deal, and talked a great deal. I've already written two thirds of my new novel. It is called "Betsy," and is all about life in America."

The writer listened to what she had to say, and was greatly amused. He loved Ginette because she had been his experiment and the confirmation of his talent. When she left he kissed her forehead, saying:

"Good-by, my *Train Bleu.*"

Ginette thought in American slang:

"Good-by, poor old thing."

H. looked at the inked pages piled up on his desk and thought that, contrary to what he had intended, he would sign them with his own name.

He believed that he secretly enjoyed doing it. Like a man who returns home after a short trip.

ADDRESSES OF MAGAZINES PUBLISHING SHORT STORIES.

Note. *This address list does not aim to be complete, but it is based simply on the magazines which I have consulted for this volume, and which have not ceased publication.*

Afrique Latine, Paris.
Les Annales, rue Saint Georges, Paris.
Belles Lettres, 89, Boulevard Exelmans, Paris.
Candide, 18, rue du Saint-Gothard, Paris.
Contemporains, 7, rue du Vieux Colombier, Paris.
Le Correspondant, 31, rue Saint Guillaume, Paris.
Europe, 7, Place Saint Sulpice, Paris.
Figaro, Rond Point des Champs Elysées, Paris.
La Grande Revue, 37, rue de Constantinople, Paris.
L'Illustration, 13, rue Saint Georges, Paris.
Les Lettres, 14, rue de l'Abbaye, Paris.
Lecture Pour Tous, 79, Boulevard Saint Germain, Paris.
Les Marges, 110, Boulevard Saint Germain, Paris.
Mercure de France, 26, rue de Condé, Paris.
Nouvelles Littéraires, 6, rue de Milan, Paris.
La Nouvelle Revue, 80, rue Taitbout, Paris.
Nouvelle Revue Critique, 16, rue José-Maria-de-Hérédia, Paris.
Nouvelle Revue Française, 3, rue de Grenelle, Paris.
Revue Bleue, 286, Boulevard Saint Germain, Paris.
Revue Critique, 27, rue Saint Sulpice, Paris.
Revue des Deux Mondes, 15, rue de l'Université, Paris.
La Revue Européenne, 6, rue Blanche, Paris.
Revue de France, 1, Avenue de l'Observatoire, Paris.
Revue Hebdomadaire, 8 rue Garancière.
Revue Mondiale, 45, rue Jacob, Paris.
Revue de Paris, 3, rue Auber, Paris.
La Revue Universelle, 157, Boulevard Saint Germain, Paris.

I can recommend particularly Candide, Les Nouvelles Litteraires, la Revue de France et la Revue de Paris to those of my readers desirous of judging the French short story in greater detail.

THE BIOGRAPHICAL ROLL OF HONOR OF FRENCH SHORT STORIES

JULY, 1926 TO JULY, 1927.

ARNOUX, ALEXANDRE. Author: Au Grand Vent; Abisag, ou l'Eglise transportée par la foi; Le Cabaret; La Nuit de St. Barnabé; Sextuor; Le Fauteuil; Supplement au Voyage de Marco Polo; Suite Variée.

BAILLY, AUGUSTE. Author: Le Champ des Carottes; Les Divins Jongleurs; Les Prédestinés et les Chaînes du Passé; La Troupe sans rivale; Les chines du Passé; La légende du blé; Le Chévalier Blanc; Le gros Lot; Le Ménétrier de Less'lach; L'Amour tue et sauve; La Carcasse; Le Pédicure Chinois; Trois Nuptiales; Eros, Invincible Eros.

BARRIERE, MARCEL. Born at Limoux, November 3, 1860. Author: L'Œuvre d'Honoré de Balzac, Le Nouveau Don Juan; L'Education d'un Contemporain; Le Roman de l'Ambition; Les Ruines de l'Amour; La Dernière Epopée; Le Monde Noir; L'Art des passions; La Nouvelle Europe; Saint Ange d'A——, histoire d'amour éllégiaque; Les Précurseurs; Un Homme de demain; Vers la guerre; L'Ere sanglante; La Fédération Latine; La Quatrième République; Le Monde Futur; Le Mauvais Eros.

BAZIN, RENÉ, de l'Académie Française. Born at Angers, December 26, 1853. Legion of Honor. Author: Une tache d'encre; Les Noellet; A l'aventure; Ma Tante Giron; La Sarcelle Bleue; Sicilie; Madame Corentine; Les Italiens d'aujourd'hui; Humble amour; Terre d'Espagne; En Province; De toute son âme; Contes de Bonne Perrette; La Terre qui meurt; Croquis de France et d'Orient; Les Oberlé; Le Guide de l'Empereur; Donatienne; Pages Choisies; Récits de la Plaine et de la Montagne; L'Isolée; Stéphanette; L'Enseigne de vaisseau Paul Henry; Le Duc de Nemours; Le Blé qui lève; Notes d'une amateur de couleurs; La Campagne Birot; Nord-Sud; Mémories d'une vieille fille; Gingolph l'abandonné; La closerie de Champdolent; Récits du temps de la Guerre; Les Nouveaux Oberlé; Il était quatre enfants; Conte de Triolet.

BEAUNIER, ANDRÉ. Born at Evreux, September 22, 1869. Author; Les Dupont-Le-Terrier; Notes sur la Russié; Bonhommes de Paris:

La Poésie Nouvelle; Les Trois Legrand; Picrate et Siméon; Le Roi Tobol; l'Art de regarder les Tableaux; Les Idées et les Hommes; Trois amies de Châtaubriant; L'Homme qui a perdu son moi; La Fille de Polichinelle; Le Sourire d'Athéna; Les Souvenirs d'un Peintre; Figures d'autrefois; Sentiments de la guerre; La Jeunesse de Joseph Joubert; Les plus détestables bonhommes; Visages de femmes; Les Surboches; Le Dernier Jour; L'Assassinée; Irène Exigeante.

Bernard, Tristan. Born at Besançon, September 7, 1866. Author: Contes de Pantruche et d'ailleurs; Sous toutes réserves; Mémoire d'un Jeune Homme rangé; Un mari pacifique; Amants et voleurs; Le Crime d'Orleans; L'Affaire Larcier; Deux amateurs de femmes; M. Codomat; Le Costaud des Epinettes; Les Deux Canards; Citoyens, Animaux, Phénomènes; Les Veillées du Chauffeur; Auteurs, Acteurs, Spectateurs; Le Roman d'un mois d'Eté; Sur les grands chemins; Nicolas Bergère; Mathilde et ses mitaines (avec Schlumberger); On nait esclave; Les Visiteurs Nocturnes; Les Juneaux de Brighton; Le Petit Café; L'Accord Parfait; Jeanne Doré; Du vin dans son eau ou l'impôt sur le revenu; La Carte d'Amour; Souvenirs épars d'un ancien cavalier; L'Enfant Prodigue du Vésinet; Corinne et Corentin; Le sceau du secret; La Vache.

Binet-Valmer, Gustave. Born at Geneva, Switzerland, June 5, 1875. Author: Les Métèques; Le Gamin tendre; Lucien; Le Sphinx de Platre; Le Plaisir; Notre pauvre amour; Le Cœur en désordre; La Passion; L'Enfant qui meurt; Le Désir et le Péché; Le Désordre; Les Jours sans Gloire; La Seconde Epouse; Cette Haine; Le Bois qui parle; Dieu et les Hommes, Une Morte.

Bondy, François de. Born in Paris. Author: Le Moqueur; Constance dans les Cieux; A l'Enfant Brune; Pygmalion aux cent amours; Framboise Hepin et Les Environs.

Bonnard, Abel. Author: Les Familiers; Les Royautés; La Vie et l'Amour; L'Adieu; La France et ses Morts; Les Morts.

Bordeaux, Henry, de l'Académie Française. Born at Thonon-les-Bains, January 29, 1870. Author: Ames modernes; Sentiments et idées ce temps; Le Pays natal; La Voie sans retour; La Peur de Vivre; L'Amour en fuite; Une Honnête femme; Le Pain Blanc; Le Lac noir; Vies Intimes; La Petite Mademoiselle; Les Roquevillard; Paysages romanesques; L'Ecran Brisé; La Robe de Laine, Le fort de Vaux; Le Carnet d'un Stagiaire; La Neige sur les pas; La Maison; Amette et Philibert; La Nouvelle Croisade des enfants; La Jeunesse Nouvelle; Les Derniers Jours du Fort de Vaux; La Chanson de Vaux-Douaumont; Les Pierres du Foyer;

La Résurrection de la Chair; Marie Louise ou les deux sœurs; Un Coin de France pendant la guerre; Le Plessis de Roye; Une doctrine de vie; La Vie Recommence; Les Deux Faces de la Vie; Au pays des Amours de Lamartine; Voici l'Heure des Ames; Ménage d'après guerre; Le Curé de Lanslevillard; Les Amants d'Annecy; La Vie est un Sport; Sport; L'Enfant aux deux mères; Amours du temps passé La Jeune Fille aux Oiseaux; Vie et Mort d'un Chamois; Le Cœur et le Sang; La Boule de Cire; L'Hallucination de La Belle; Madame d'Arboise; l'Amour et le Bonheur; Alpinus. La Remplacante.

Bourget, Paul, de l'Académie Française. Born at Amiens, September 2, 1853. Author: L'Irréparable; Deuxième Amour; Profils Perdus; André Cornélis; Recommencements; Voyageuses; Complications sentimentales; La Duchesse Bleue; Le Luxe des Autres; Le Geste du Fils; Nemesis; Conflits Intimes; Cœurs D'Enfants; Tragiques Remous.

Boutet, Frederic. Author: La Lanterne Rouge; Celles qui les attendent; Lucie, Jean et Jo; Morgam passa; Totote et Cie.; Les Malheurs d'Auguste; Quart de Livre et la Fille de Mme. Tranchart; Un Beau Mariage; Les Saphire; Le Réalisateur; Le Paradis Perdu; Gribiche; Le Harem Eparpille. Scene Tournante.

Cherau, Gaston. Born at Niort, November 6, 1872. Author: Les grandes époques de M. Thébault; La Saison balnéaire de M. Thébault; Monseigneur voyage; Champi-tortu; La Prison de Verre; L'Oiseau de Prois; Le Monstre; Le Remous; Valentine Pacquault; Braco; Bilan; Vent du Destin.

Colette. Author: La Paix chez les Bêtes; Dans La Foule; Mitsou, ou comment l'esprit vient aux filles; Chéri; Les Heures Longues; La Maison de Claudine; L'Envers du Music-Hall; L'Entrave, suite à la Vagabonde; Le Voyage Egoïste; La Chambre Eclairée; Sept Dialogues de Bêtes; La Retraite Sentimentale; Claudine en ménage (in coöperation with Willy); La Vagabonde; L'Ingénue Libertine; Claudine à l'école (in coöperation with Willy); Claudine s'en va; Claudine à Paris. Les Vrilles de la Vigne.

Coolus, Romain. Born in Rennes in 1868. He has written extensively in the *Figaro, Gil Blas,* the *Journal* et *L'Echo de Paris.* Coolus is primarily, however, not a writer of short stories but a dramatist. He is serving his third term as President of the Society of Authors and Playwrights. He is the author of Les Amants de Suzy, Lucette, Antoinette, Petite Peste, L'Enfant Chérie, Cœur à Cœur, Le Risqué, Une Femme Passa, 97, Les Bleus de l'Amour, Les Roses Rouges,

L'Eternel Masculine, etc. His dramatic genius is clearly shown in the simply told short story, the Cocherel Circus.

DEKOBRA, MAURICE. Born at Paris, May 26, 1885. Author: Les Mémoires de Rat de Cave; Histoire de Brigands; Le voyage sentimental de Lord Littlebird; Les Liaisons tranquilles; Messieurs Les Tommies; Sammy, Volontaire Américain; Grain de Cachou; L'Etonnante Vie du Colonel Jack; Le Gentleman Burlesque; Prince ou Pître; Hamydal le Philosophe; Minuit Place Pigalle; Le Rire dans le brouillard; La Fillete aux oranges; Une Momie a été perdu; La Madonna des Sleepings.

DELARUE-MARDRUS, LUCIE. Born at Honfleur, November 3, 1880. Author: La Figure de Proue; Comme Tout le Monde; La Monnaie de Singe; L'Inexpérimentée; Douce Moitié; Un Cancre; Deux Amants; Souffle de Tempête; Toutoune et son Amour; A Maman; L'Apparition; Le Pain Blanc; Lucie; Amélie et les Désséchés; La Mère et le Fils; Le Veau Lunaire; Le Beau Baiser.

DERENNES, CHARLES. Born at Villeneuve sur Lot, August 4, 1882. Winner of Goncourt Prize. Author: L'Enivrante Angoisse; L'Amour Fesse; La Tempête; La Nuit d'été; Les Bains dans la Pactole; Les Caprices de Nouche; Persephone; Le Renard Bleu; Le Pour et Le Contre; Kiki; Rat Blanc; Filon, le lezard vert; La Sirene.

DIEUDONNÉ, ROBERT. Born in Paris in 1879. Began newspaper work in 1899 at Intransigeant. Also writes regularly for Figaro, Candide, Œuvre, and Femina. Dramatist of note. Author: Hommes de Chevaux; La Vedette; La Lettre du Feu; La Bonne Aventure; Les Vainqueurs; Bordeaux-Paris; Le Pur Sang; Huguette; L'Arche de Noé; La Demoiselle de Chantilly; La Rose de Septembre, etc.

DOMINIQUE, PIERRE. Born at Courtenay in 1889. Author: Fumées; Contes Desobligeants; Notre Dame de la Sagesse; Deux Jours chez Ludendorff; La Proie de Venus; La Morte; Le Besoin d'empire; Les Condamnés à Mort; La Reine de Saba.

DUHAMEL, GEORGES. Author: Le Miracle; Lapointe et Ropiteau; Elévation et mort d'Armand Branche; Entretiens dans le Tumulte; Paul Claudel; Confession de Minuit; La Lumière; Les Hommes Abandonnés; Civilisation; Suite Hollandaise; Le Dernier.

DUVERNOIS, HENRI. Born in Paris, March 4, 1875. The leading naturalist short story writer. Author: Le Beau Gras; Fifinoiseau;

Le Mari de la Couturière; Nounette ou la Déesse aux cent bouches; Popote; La Maladresse; La Maison des confidences; Marchandes d'Oublis; Le Roseau de Fer-Edgar; Les Demoiselles de Perdition; Name ou le lit conjugal; Crapotte; Edgar; La Brebis galeuse; Le Revenant; Servante; Toto; La Leçon Inutile; Morte la Bête; L'Eunuque.

FARRERE, CLAUDE. Born at Lyons, April 27, 1876. Author: Fumées d'opium; Les Civilisés; L'Homme qui Assassina; Mlle. Dax; Les Petites Alliées; La Bataille; Les Temporeras; Dix-sept Histoires de Marins; Quatorze Histoires de Soldats; La Maison des Hommes Vivants; Bêtes et Gens qui s'aimèrent; La Dernière Déesse; La Vieille Histoire; Les Condamnées à Mort; Roxelane; Croquis d'Orient; Damoclés; Cent Millions d'Or; Une Jeune Fille Voyagea; La Mort de l'Emden.

GERALDY, PAUL. Author: Les Petites Ames; Toi et Moi; La Guerre; Madame; Les Noces d'Argent; Aimer; Les Grands Garçons; Le Prélude.

GIRAUDOUX, JEAN. Author: Juliette au Pays des Hommes; Visite chez Le Prince; La Pharmacienne; Provinciales; L'Ecole des Indifférents; Lectures pour une ombre; Simon le Pathétique; Amica America; Elpenor; Adieu à la Guerre; Adorable Clio; Suzanne et le Pacifique; Siegfried et le Limousin; La Première Disparition de Jerome Bardini.

GUITET-VAUQUELIN, PIERRE. Born at Montauban, June 10, 1882. Author: L'Ame Nouvelle; Le Monopole Universitaire; La Revue Rose Toulousaine; Le Triomphe de la Chair; Mendiandou; Les Immobiles; Le Marchand d'Illusions; Le Sang des Vignes; La Force du Doute; Le Phorminx; L'Amour en Détresse; La Torpille; L'Ame de Paris; La Culture de Citrus; L'Amour Exige; La Passion Aragonaise.

HARRY, MYRIAM. Author: Passage de Bedouins; Madame Petit Jardin; Sonia à Paris; Sonia chez les Barbares; La Petite Fille de Jerusalem; L'Impérissable Tendresse; Le Manteau Tututelaire; La Veuve de Tutankhamen.

HIRSCH, CHARLES-HENRY. Born at Paris, April 18, 1870. Author: La Vierge aux Tulipes; Eva Tumarches et ses amis; La Demoiselle de Comédie; Pantins et Ficelles; Le Tigre et Coquelicot; Les Disparates; Des hommes, des femmes et des bêtes; Dame Fortune; Le Sang de Paris; Racaille et Parias; Les Châteaux de

Sable; L'Amour en herbe; Le Crime de Potru, soldat; La Grande Capricieuse; Le Chêvre aux pieds d'or; Zulaïna; L'Enchaînement; Nicolas Florinette; Le Silencieux; Un aimable Voleur; Le Suborneur; La Vie Course d'Obstacles.

JALOUX, EDMOND. Born at Marseilles, June 19, 1878. Author: L'Agonie de l'Amour; Les Sangsues; Le Jeune Homme au Masque; L'Ecole des Mariages; Le Démon de la Vie; Le Reste est Silence; Le Boudoir de Proserpine; L'Eventail de crêpe; L'Incertaine; Fumées dans la Campagne; Au-dessus de la Ville; Les Femmes et la Vie; Les Amours Perdues; La Fin d'un beau jour; L'Escalier d'Or; La Fugitive; La Destinée; Le roi Cophetua; Coin des Cypres; La Lettre.

JOLIVET, RENÉ, was born on the 28th of December in Albertsville, Savoie. At the age of fifteen, he was already a poet of local note. He is one of the best known of the younger school. Among his works are Flammes Errantes, Le Mal de Gloire, Les Hommes Maudits, La Chasse au Miroir (a play) and Fernand Divoire.

JOUHANDEAU, MARCEL. La Chêve d'Ivoire, N. L. 24. 5. 24. La Bergère Nanon. N. R. F. 2. 24. Author: Marie Albinier; Dame Elie.

LAPAIRE, HUGHES. La Treille en Fleur. IL. 29. 9. 23. Author: Le Chemin du Desir.

LARBAUD, VALERY. Author: A. O. Barnabooth; Fermina Màrquez; Enfantines; Introduction aux Pages Choisies de Walt Whitman; Beauté, mon beau souci; Amants, heureux amants; Mon Plus Secret Conseil.

LARGUIER, LEO. Born in La Grande-Combe, December 6, 1878. Author: La Maison du Poète; Les Isolements; Jacques; L'Après-midi chez l'antiquaire.

LAVEDAN, HENRI, de l'Académie Française. Born in Orléans, April 9, 1859. Author: Mam'zelle Vertu; Reine Janvier; Lydie; Inconsolables; Sire; Petites Fêtes; La Haute; Une Famille; Nocturnes; Le Nouveau Jeu; La Critique du Prince d'Aurec; Leur Cœur; Une Cour; Leur beau physique; Le Lit; Le Prince d'Aurec; Leurs sœurs; Les Marionnettes; Le Vieux Marcheur; La Valse; Les Départs; Les Deux Noblesses; Les Beaux Dimanches; Le Carnet d'un petit châtelain; Le Marquis de Priola; C'est servi! Viveurs; Varennes (in coöperation with G. Lenôtre); Baignoire 9; Le Duel; Le Bon Temps; En Visite; Bon an, mal an; La Vie cour-

ante; Les Grandes Heures; La Famille française; La Chienne du Roi; Servir; La Valse-Pétard; Les Sacrifices (in coöperation with Michael Zamacoïs); Lydie; Panteau; Belle Histoire de Geneviève.

LICHTENBERGER, ANDRÉ. Author: Mon Petit Trott (Académie Française, Montyon prize); La Petite Sœur de Trott; La Petite; Biche; Le Cœur est le même; Le Sang Nouveau; Le Petit Roi; L'Automne; Notre Minnie Lines; Portraits d'aieules; Portrait de jeunes filles; La Mort de Corinthe; Scènes en Famille; Chez les Graffougnat; Les Centaures; Poupette, fille d'Allah; Gorri le Forban; Kaligouca le cœur fidèle; Raraméné, histoire d'ailleurs; Père; Rédemption; La Gifle; Monsieur de Migurac; La Folle Aventure; Les Roses de France; La Petite Chaperone vert; Tous Héros; Un Pauvre Homme; Sang Basque.

MACORLAN, PIERRE. Born in Péronne. Author: La Maison du Retour Ecœurant; Les Pattes en l'Air; Les contes de la Pipe en Terre; Le Rire Jaune; Les Poissons Morts; L'U 713 ou les Gentilhommes d'Infortune; Les Bourreurs de Crânes; Le Chant de l'Equipage; Les Mystères de la Morgue (in coöperation with F. Carco); La Clique du Café Brebis; Le Fin (souvenirs d'Allemagne); Vanderpett et Napoléon; Le Nègre Léonard et le Maître Jean Miellin; A Bord de L'Etoile Matutine; Bob; La Bête Conquérante; Petit Manuel du Parfait Aventurier; L'Amour et les Saisons; Marguerite de la Nuit; L'Inhumaine; A l'Hôpital Marie Madeleine.

MILLE, PIERRE. Born in Choisy-le-Roi in 1864. Author: Sur la Vaste Terre; Sous leur Dictée; Caillou et Titi; Paraboles et Diversions; Le Monarque; Naer Eddine et son Epouse; Quand Panurge ressuscita; L'Enfant et la Reine morte; Histoires Exotiques et merveilleuses; La Nuit d'amour sur la Montagne; Trois femmes; L'Ange du Bizarre; Barnavaux; Le Monarque; Les Mémoires d'un dada besogneux de l'armistice à 1925; La Détresse des Harpagons; Hercule et Omphale; La Vérité sur la découverte de l'Amérique; La Victoire et . . . la Retraite; Sacerdos in Æternum; A Franc Etrier; Le Deputé.

MIOMANDRE, FRANCIS DE. Born in Tours, 1880. Author: Les Reflets et les Souvenirs; Ecrit sur de l'Eau; Le Vent et la Poussière; L'Ingénu; Mémoires de Gazelle, tortue; Au Bon Soleil; Visages; Figures d'Hier et d'Aujourd'hui; D'Amour et d'Eau Fraîche; L'Aventure de Thérèse Beauchamps; Le Veau d'or et la Vache enragée; Le Greluchon Sentimental; Olympe et Ses Amis; L'Enfant Prodigue et Son Père; Une Etrange Amitié.

MORAND, PAUL. Born March 13, 1888. Author: Lampes à Arc; Feuilles de Température; Tendres Stocks; Ouvert la Nuit; Fermé la Nuit; Lewis et Irêne; L'Enfant de 100 ans. Les Amis Nouveaux; L'Europe Galante; Je Brule Moscou. Le Buddha Vivant.

NOAILLES, COMTESSE MATHIEU DE. Born in Paris, November 15, 1876. Author: Le Cœur Innombrable; L'Ombre des Jours (poems); La Nouvelle Espérance; Le Visage Emerveillé; La Domination; De la Rive d'Europe à la Rive d'Asie; Les Vivants et les Morts; Les Eblouissements; Les Forces Eternelles; Les Innocentes; Tragédie Simple.

PEROCHON, ERNEST. Born in 1885. Author: Flutes et Bourdons; Chansons Alternées; Le Creux des Maisons; Chemin de Plaine; Nêne; Les Ombres; En se dandinant; Les Gardiennes; Sous la Bonne Etoile; Huit Gouttes d'Opium; Sur la Pointe des Pieds.

PICARD, GASTON. Born in Paris, January 18, 1892. Author: La Confession du Chat; La cœur se donne; La bougie bleue; Des dames, des drames et des rames; Le dernier amour de Louise Payran; La danse de l'amour; La frande inquiétude des hommes.

REBOUX, PAUL. Born in Paris, May 21, 1877. Author: Josette; La Maison de Danses; Le Phare; La Petite Papacoda; Le Jeune Amant; A la Manière de . . . ; Elles et Lui; Trio; Le Nid.

REGNIER, HENRI DE, de l'Académie Française. Born in Honfleur (Calvados), December 24, 1864. Author: Premiers Poèmes; Poèmes 1887-1892; Les Jeux Rustiques et Divins; La Canne de Jaspe; Le Tréfle Blanc; La Double Maîtresse; Les Médailles d'Argile; Figures et Caractères; Les Amants Singuliers; Le Bon Plaisir; La Cité des Eaux; Le Mariage de Minuit; Les Vacances d'un jeune homme sage; Les Rencontres de M. de Bréot; Le Passé Vivant; La Sandale Ailée; Sujets et Paysages; Esquisses Vénitiennes; L'Amour et le Plaisir; La Peur de l'Amour; Les Scrupules de Sganarelle; Couleur du Temps; Le Miroir des Heures; La Flambée; L'Amphisbène; Contes de France et d'Italie; Portraits et Souvenirs; Le Plateau de Laque; Romaine Mirmault; L'Illusion héroïque de Tito Bassi; Poèmes 1914-1916; Les Petits Messieurs de Nèvres; Scènes Mythologiques.

ROSNY-AINE, J. H. Author: Nell Horn; L'Aube du Futur; Les Trois Rivales; Résurrection; L'Enigme de Bivreuse; La Force Mystérieuse; Marthe Baraquin; Les Rafales; Amour Etrusque; Et l'Amour ensuite; La Mort de la Terre; L'Appel du Bonheur;

Dans les Etoiles; L'Immolation; Marc Fane; Les Corneilles; Daniel Valgraive; Vamireh; L'Impérieuse Bonté; L'Indomptée; Les Origines; Les Ames Perdues; Une Rupture; La Charpente; L'Heritage; Le Crime du Docteur; Le Docteur Harambur; Thérèse Degaudy; Les Deux Femmes; Une Reine; La Luciole; Le Millionnaire; L'Epave; Le Testament Volé; Le Fardeau; L'Autre Femme; Eyimah; Renouveau; Origines; Le Serment; Un Double Amour; L'Aiguille d'or; Le Chemin d'Amour; Sous le Fardeau; La Toison d'Or; Le Faune; Le Crime de Gramercy Park; Nymphée; Les Audacieux; Confidences sur l'amitié des tranchées; La force mystérieuse; Le Coffre-Fort; La Fauve; Le Félin Géant; Les Pures et les Impures; Torches et Lumignons; La Haine Surnaturelle; L'Amour d'abord; Claire Tecel; La Fiancée de l'Ombre.

THARAUD, JEROME ET JEAN. Born in St. Junien (Hte. Vienne), May 11, 1874. Authors: Hommage au Général Charette; La Fête Arabe; La Bataille à Scutari d'Albanie; La Tragédie de Ravaillac; La Mort de Paul Déroulède; L'Ombre de la Croix; Rabat, ou les Heures Marocaines; Une relève; Marakech ou les Seigneurs de l'Atlas; Un royaume de Dieu; La maîtresse servante; Dingley; L'Illustre Ecrivain; La Ville et les Champs; Quand Israël est Roi; La Randonnée de Samba Diouf; Un drame de l'Automne.

VAUDOYER, J. L. Born in Plessis-Piquet (Seine), September 10, 1883. Author: Les Compagnes du Rêve; L'Amour masqué; La Bien-Aimée; Suzanne et l'Italie; Variations sur les Ballets Russes; La Nuit Persane; Le Spectre de la Rose; Propos et Promenades; Les Papiers de Cléonthe; Les permissions de Clément Bellin; La Reine Evanouie; Entre Hier et Demain; Peau d'Ange; Raymonde Mangematin.

VEBER, PIERRE. Born in Paris, May 15, 1869. Author: Loute; Ma Fée; L'Aventure; Une Passade; Chez les Snobs; La Joviale Comédie; Les Véber; Les Enfants s'amusent; L'Ami de la Maison; Les Cocches profondes; Amour . . . Amour; Qui Perd Gagne; L'Homme qui vendit son âme au diable; L'Ecole des Ministres; Le Bonheur; Une Aventure de Pompadour; La jolie madame Livran; L'Entremise; Le Théâtre incomplet; Le Rebut d'Humanité; Le Geolier de Leavenworth.

VELY, ADRIEN. Born in 1864. Author: English School; Une Lecture; Monsieur Schnitz et Monsieur Schnatz; Les Petites Amies de Monsieur Gratien; Saint Gratien est dans nos murs; Nelson Brown, détective privé . . . de toute intelligence; En voilà des histoires.

WOLFF, PIERRE. Born in Paris. Author: Les Maris de leurs filles; Les Marionettes; Le Voile déchiré; Les Ailes brisées; Douce Esther; L'Homme qui égara son amour; La Préférée.

YVER, COLETTE. Born in Segré (Maine-et-Loire), July 28, 1874. Author: La Pension du Sphinx; Les Cervelines; La Bergerie; Comment s'en vont les Reines; Princesses de science; Les Dames du Palais; Le Métier de Roi; Un Coin du Voile; Les Sables Mouvants; Le Mystère des Béatitudes; Mirabelle de Pamelune; Les Cousins riches; L'Homme et le Dieu; La trouvaille de Lord Gardenhope; Vous serez comme les Dieux; Le Festin des Autres; Les Deux Naufragés. Le Train Bleu.